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LIBRARY ESSAYS

PAPERS RELATED TO THE WORK
OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

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LIBRARY ESSAYS

PAPERS RELATED TO THE WORK
OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

ARTHUR E. BOSTWICK, PH. D.

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PREFACE

The author of these papers began his service in librarianship in April, 1895. He celebrates his silver jubilee by gathering them into a single volume. Before becoming a librarian he had worked for many years as teacher, editor and journalist, and the use of the pen having become second nature, he took it up in behalf of libraries and librarians, somewhat sooner, perhaps, than experience would warrant. However, the papers reflect to a certain extent the progress of library work during the past quarter century.

A. E. B.

CONTENTS

PAINS AND PENALTIES IN LIBRARY WORK - - - 3
Read at the Magnolia Conference of the American Library Association, June, 1902. (*A. L. A. Proceedings,* 1902, p. 29-34)

HOW LIBRARIANS CHOOSE BOOKS - - - - - - 17
(*Public Libraries,* April, 1903, p. 137-41)

THE WORK OF THE SMALL PUBLIC LIBRARY - - - 29
(*Library Journal,* August, 1903, p. 596-600)

LAY CONTROL IN LIBRARIES AND ELSEWHERE - - 39
Read before the Trustees' Section of the American Library Association, at the Niagara Conference. (*A. L. A. Proceedings,* 1903, p. 199-202)

THE WHOLE DUTY OF A LIBRARY TRUSTEE: FROM A LIBRARIAN'S STANDPOINT - - - - - - 49
An address before the Trustees' Section of the American Library Association. (*A. L. A. Proceedings,* 1906, p. 40-4)

THE DAY'S WORK: SOME CONDITIONS AND SOME IDEALS - - - - - - - - - - - - 59
Presidential address before the New York Library Association, Lake Placid, September 21, 1903. (*Library Journal,* October, 1903, p. 704-7)

LIBRARY STATISTICS - - - - - - - - - - - 69
(*Library Journal,* January, 1904, p. 5-8)

Old Probabilities in the Library—His Modest Vaticinations - - - - - - 79
Read before the Pennsylvania Library Club, Philadelphia, May 9, 1904. (*Library Journal,* October, 1904, p. 517-23)

The Love of Books as a Basis for Librarianship - - - - - - - - - - - - - 97
Read before the New York Library Association, Twilight Park, September, 1906. (*Library Journal,* February, 1907, p. 51-5)

The Library as the Educational Center of a Town - - - - - - - - - - - - 111
(*Public Libraries,* May, 1907, p. 171-4)

The Librarian as a Censor - - - - - - - 121
Presidential address before the American Library Association, Lake Minnetonka Conference, June, 1908. (*Library Journal,* July, 1908, p. 257-64)

How to Raise the Standard of Book Selection 141
Read at the meeting of the Library commissions of the New England States, Hartford, Conn., February 11, 1909. (*Public Libraries,* May, 1909, p. 163-7)

Library Circulation at Long Range - - - 221
(*Library Journal,* July, 1913, p. 391-4)

Conflicts of Jurisdiction in Library Systems - - - - - - - - - - - - - 231
Read before the round table of branch librarians at the Washington conference, May 28, 1914. (*Library Journal,* August, 1914, p. 588-91)

THREE KINDS OF LIBRARIANS - - - - - - - 241
Read before the Missouri Library Association, Sedalia, November 18, 1914 . (*Public Libraries,* January, 1915, p. 1-4; February, 1915, p. 47-50)

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND MENTAL TRAINING - - 255
(*School Review,* June, 1915, p. 395-405)

THE LIBRARY AND THE BUSINESS MAN - - - 269
A luncheon address to the Advertising Club of St. Louis. (*Library Journal,* April, 1917, p. 259-64)

SYSTEM IN THE LIBRARY - - - - - - - - 153
Read before the Missouri State Library Association, Columbia, Mo., October 28, 1909. (*Library Journal,* November, 1909, p. 476-82)

THE EXPLOITATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY - - 171
Address before the American Library Association at the Pasadena Conference, May 19, 1911. (*A. L. A. Proceedings,* 1911, p. 60-5)

SERVICE SYSTEMS IN LIBRARIES - - - - - 183
(*Library Journal,* June, 1912, p. 299-304)

EFFICIENCY RECORDS IN LIBRARIES - - - - - 199
(*Library Journal,* March, 1913, p. 131-3)

MAL-EMPLOYMENT IN THE LIBRARY - - - - 205
Read before the Iowa Library Association. (*Iowa Library Quarterly,* October, 1912, p. 247-52)

COST OF ADMINISTRATION - - - - - - - - 217
Report to the American Library Institute. (*Public Libraries,* December, 1912, p. 416-18)

Poets, Libraries and Realities - - - - - 283
An address at the opening of the new building of the Indianapolis Public Library. (*Library Journal,* December, 1917, p. 944-50)

The Church and the Public Library - - - 299
(*Homiletic Review,* June, 1918, p. 435-9)

The Future of Library Work - - - - - 309
(*A. L. A. Bulletin,* September, 1919, p. 50-7)

Popularizing Music Through the Library - - 325
Read before the National Association of Music Teachers and reprinted from the published Proceedings for 1918.

Two Cardinal Sins - - - - - - - - - 341

A Message to Beginners - - - - - - - 357

Luck in the Library - - - - - - - - - 373

The Library as a Museum - - - - - - 393

The Library and the Locality - - - - - 409

Index - - - - - - - - - - - 429

LIBRARY ESSAYS

PAPERS RELATED TO THE WORK
OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

PAINS AND PENALTIES IN LIBRARY WORK*

In somewhat the same way as Irving makes Diedrich Knickerbocker begin his history of New York with the creation of the world, so we may open a discussion of this subject with a word on the theory of punishment. We all know that neither moral philosophers nor penologists are agreed in this matter. Do we inflict punishment to satisfy our eternal sense of justice, to prevent further wrong-doing on the part of the person punished, as an example to others, or to reform the delinquent? So far as the justicial theory goes, it is unnecessary here to discuss whether it is founded merely on the old savage feeling of revenge, which having done its part in ensuring punishment to the wrong-doer in the uncivilized past, should now be put aside. As a matter of fact the rule, "Let no guilty man escape," is a very good one for practical purposes, whatever its theoretical implications. Why should it be necessary to proceed according to any one theory in administering punishment? Practically in the home, at school, and in the courtroom the simple administration of justice does very well for us, and when we go a little farther into the matter we see that each of the other elements enters into consideration. Certainly it is so in the library.

Penalties for the infraction of our rules should be so inflicted that future wrong-doing both on the part of the culprit and on that of the remainder of the

*Read at the Magnolia Conference of the American Library Association, June, 1902.

public becomes less likely than before. Whether we always do this in the most satisfactory way may be queried.

Punishable acts committed in a library may be divided, according to the old ecclesiastical classification, into *mala prohibita* and *mala in se;* in other words, into acts that are simply contrary to library regulations and those that are absolutely wrong. To steal a book is wrong anywhere and does not become so merely because the act is committed in a library; but the retention of a borrowed book for fifteen instead of fourteen days is not absolutely wrong, but simply contrary to library regulations.

The keeping of books overtime is a purely library offence, committed against the library and to be punished by the library; and with it may be classed such infractions of the rules as failure to charge or discharge a book, loud talking or misbehavior below the rank of really disorderly conduct, such injury to books as does not constitute wilful mutilation, the giving of a fictitious name at the application desk, etc.

For all these strictly library offences the favorite penalties seem to be two in number—the exaction of a fine and exclusion from library privileges—temporary or permanent. The former is more used than the latter, and I venture to think unjustly so. From the sole standpoint of punishment the great advantage of a fine is that it touches people in their most sensitive point—the pocket. But this is a ganglion whose sensitiveness is in inverse proportion to its size; in one case the exaction of a cent means the confiscation of the possessor's entire fortune; in another the delinquent could part with a hundred dollars without depriving himself of a necessity or a pleasure. Of course this lack of adaptability to the conditions of

the person to be punished is not confined to this one method. Imprisonment, for instance, may be the ruin of a life to the hitherto respectable person, while to the tramp it may simply mean a month's shelter and food. But in the case of a money penalty the lack of adaptability is particularly noticeable, and hence wherever it is exacted a large portion of the public comes to forget that it is a penalty at all. Instead of a punishment exacted in return for the commission of a misdemeanor and intended to discourage the repetition thereof, it is looked upon as payment for the privilege of committing the misdemeanor, and it in fact becomes this very thing. Thus, in states where there is a prohibitory law, and periodical raids are made on saloons with the resulting fines, these fines often become in effect license fees, and are so regarded by both delinquents and authorities. Where a municipality provides that automobiles shall not be speeded in its streets under penalty of a heavy fine, the wealthy owners of motor-carriages too often regard this as permission to speed on payment of a stated amount, and act accordingly. So in the library, the fine for keeping books overtime is widely regarded as a charge for the privilege of keeping the books longer than the formal rules allow. Being so regarded, the fine loses a great part of its punitive effect, and largely becomes in fact what it is popularly thought to be. Thus we have a free public library granting extra privileges to those who can afford to pay for them and withholding the same from those who cannot afford to pay—an extremely objectional state of things.

In making this characterization I am aware that the sale of additional facilities and privileges by a free library is regarded as proper by a large number of librarians, and that the extension of systems of

which it is a feature is widely urged. It is found in the St. Louis plan for fiction, which has been so successful, and still more in Mr. Dewey's proposed library bookstore. That all these plans are admirable in many ways may be freely acknowledged. In so far as they may be adopted by endowed libraries they are certainly unobjectionable. But in spite of their advantages, it seems to me that their use in an institution supported from the public funds is a mistake. The direct payment of money to any institution so supported, even if such payment is logically justifiable, is open to so much misconstruction and is so commonly misunderstood or misinterpreted, that I would hold up as an ideal the total abolition of all money transactions between the individual members of a public and institutions supported by that public as a whole.

The present subject evidently does not justify further discussion of this point, but its mention here is proper because if library fines have become in many cases payments for a privilege, that very fact should lead those who agree with what has been said above to strive for their abolition.

Another objection to the fine, which is, curiously enough, also the chief reason why it is almost hopeless to look for its abolition, is the fact that wherever fines have been applied they have become a source of revenue that cannot well be neglected. In a village not far from New York the receipts from bicycle fines at one time nearly paid the running expenses of the place. Agitation in favor of substituting other methods of punishing the cyclists who ride on the sidewalks and fail to light their lamps at sundown would evidently be hopeless here. In the same way receipts from fines have become a very considerable source of income in large libraries, and are not to be neglected

even in small ones. This is apparent in the following table*:

	Income	Fines
Boston	$309,417.52	$4,621.45
Chicago	285,951.22	7,131.19
Philadelphia	141,954.45	2,385.52
Brooklyn	105,081.19	4,013.26
N. Y. C. F. L.	91,613.12	4,648.98
Buffalo	87,946.85	2,951.21
Milwaukee	71,328.80	1,295.99
San Francisco	64,966.31	2,250.85
Newark	43,706.36	1,905.17

Evidently the abolition of fines in these cases would mean a reduction of income that would make itself felt at once.

Now, of course, the knowledge that the detection of wrongdoing is financially profitable to the detector results in increased vigilance. So far, that is a good thing. But it goes farther than this: it makes the authorities strict regarding technicalities; it may even lead to the encouragement of infraction of the law in order that the penalties may reach a larger amount. In the town that is supported by bicycle fines we may fairly conclude that no resident calls the attention of the unwary cyclist to the warning sign, past which he wheels toward the sidewalk. To do so would decrease the village revenue and raise taxes. So too, what librarian would wish to adopt any course that will certainly reduce the money at his disposal for salaries and books?

Supposing, however, that this loss can be made up in some way, is there anything that can be substituted for the fine? It has already been stated that suspension from library privileges is in use as a penalty to a considerable extent, and there seems to be no reason why this should not be extended to the case of overdue books. There might, for instance, be a rule that for every day of illegal retention of a book the holder should be suspended from library

*Figures for 1901.

privileges for one week. The date of expiration of the suspension would be noted on the holder's card, and the card would not be returned to him before that date.

This plan would probably have interesting results which there is not time to anticipate here. But as long as books cost money and librarians refuse to work altogether for love, financial considerations must play a large part in library changes. The only way in which fines can be abolished without decreasing income is to make the abolition a condition of an increased appropriation, which, of course, could be done by the appropriating body. The making of such a condition is extremely unlikely. Hence, if we agree that fines are undesirable we must regard their abolition as an unattainable ideal. We may, however, treat them so as to minimize their bad effect, and this, I believe, may be done in either or both of the following two ways:

(1) We may emphasize the punitive value of the fine and at the same time increase its value as a source of revenue by making it larger. This would doubtless decrease the number of overdue books, and the exact point where the increase should stop would be the point where this decrease should so balance the increase of fines as to make the total receipts a maximum; or, if this maximum should greatly exceed the revenue received from fines under the old arrangement, then the rate could be still farther increased until the total receipts fell to the old amount. The practical method would be to increase the fines by a fraction of a cent per day at intervals of several months, comparing the total receipts for each interval with that of the corresponding period under the old arrangement; and stopping when this sum showed signs of decrease.

(2) We may give the librarian the option of substituting suspension for the fine whenever, in his judgment, this is advisable. This is the course pursued by the law when it gives to the trial judge the option of fining or imprisoning an offender. In cases where a fine is no punishment at all, and where books are kept overtime deliberately, suspension from library privileges would probably prove salutary. A variant of the second plan would be to allow the culprit himself to substitute suspension for his fine. This in effect is what the offender in the police court does when he avows that he has not the money to pay his fine and is sent to jail to work it off. At present when a library offender is manifestly unable to pay his fine there is usually no alternative but to remit it or to deny the culprit access to the library until it is paid—in many cases an unreasonably heavy punishment.

Of course there is no reason why all these modifications of existing rules should not be made together. According to this plan fines would be raised and suspension would be substituted in any case at the librarian's option and in all cases where the person fined avows that he is unable to pay his fine. The rates can be so adjusted that under this plan there is no decrease of revenue, but rather a net increase.

Of course the adoption of such rules would be regarded by a large portion of the public as a curtailment of privileges, but such an outcry as it would probably raise ought not to be objectionable as it is a necessary step in the instruction of the users of a library regarding the proper function of penalties for infraction of its rules. These rules are for the benefit of the majority and the good sense of that majority ought to, and doubtless would, come to the rescue of the library authorities on short notice.

As long as the library fine is a recognized penalty, numerous petty questions will continue to arise regarding its collection, registration, and use. Any exhaustive treatment of these is impossible in the limits of a single paper and I have chosen to neglect most of them in order to dwell on the question in its larger aspects. It is the exaction of the fine, after all, that is the library penalty—the money is part of the library income and its collection and disposition are properly questions of finance. One point, however, regarding the disposition of the fines bears directly on what has been said. In municipal public libraries like that of Boston, where the city requires that the fines shall be turned directly into the public treasury and not retained for library use, the substitution of a different penalty would presumably involve no diminution of income. From ordinary considerations of equity, however, it seems to me that this disposition of the fines is objectionable. If the fines are to be turned into the city treasury they should be placed to the credit of the library appropriation as they are in Brooklyn.

Regarding the collection of fines there are one or two points that bear directly on their efficiency as a punitive measure. First, shall fines be charged? It seems a hardship to refuse a well-known member a book because he does not happen to have with him the change to pay a 15 cent fine. This point of view, however, loses sight again of the element of punishment. When the delinquent who is fined a dollar in the police court does not have the money with him, does he request the magistrate to charge it and send in a bill for the month's penalties all at once? The true method, I am convinced, is to insist on cash payment of fines, and if this is done promptly their character as penalties will be more generally recognized.

Another point in regard to the collection of fines is their effect on the assistants themselves. In every library a stream of money passes in at the desk in very small amounts. This must all be accounted for, and we have the alternative of requiring vouchers for every cent or of simply keeping a memorandum account and seeing that the cash corresponds with it at the close of the day.

This latter plan, in some form, is usually adopted. To misappropriate funds under these circumstances is not difficult, and I submit that it is not right to place a large number of young girls in a situation where such misappropriation is easy and safe. In spite of Mark Twain, who prays that he may be led into temptation early and often, that he may get accustomed to it, I do not believe that this is a good general policy to pursue. We all know of cases where assistants have fallen into temptation, and we should not hold the library altogether blameless in the matter. But on general principles such a plan is not good business. Every one who is responsible for money collected must show vouchers that he turns over every cent that has been given to him. Why should the library assistant be an exception? I look to see some form of cash register on every charging desk in the ideal library of the future, nor can I see that its use would be a reflection on the honesty of the assistants any more than the refusal of a bank to cash an improperly endorsed check is a reflection on the honesty of the holder.

This is on the supposition that we are to retain the fine as a penalty. Such considerations, of course, weigh down the balance still more strongly in favor of its abolition.

I have devoted so much space to the penalty for keeping books overtime because the rule on this subject is the one that is chiefly broken in a free

public library. Other offences are usually dealt with by suspension, and very properly so. For the loss or accidental injury of a book, however, a fine is again the penalty, and here, as the offence is the causing of a definite money loss to the library, there is more reason for it. The money in this case, indeed, is to be regarded as damages, and its payment is rather restitution than punishment. Even here, however, the argument against money transactions with a free institution seems to hold good. There is no reason in the majority of cases why he who loses or destroys a book should not give to the library a new copy instead of the price thereof, and for minor injury suspension is surely an adequate penalty.

Here we may pause for a moment to ask: What right has a library to inflict any penalties at all? I must leave the full discussion of this question to the lawyers, but I am quite sure that libraries, like some other corporations, often enact and enforce rules that they have no legal right to make. To cite an instance that came under my own observation, the Brooklyn Public Library's rules were for more than a year, according to good authority, absolutely invalid because they had not been enacted by the Municipal Assembly, and that library had no right to collect a single fine. Yet during this time it did collect fines amounting to several thousand dollars, and not a word of protest was heard from the public. In this and similar cases we are getting down to first principles—the consent of the governed; which, whether based on ignorance or knowledge, is what we must rely on in the end for the enforcement of law in self-governing communities. I am afraid that it is this general consent, in a good many instances, that is enabling us to enforce our regulations, rather than any right derived from positive law. To take a related instance, it is by no means certain that libra-

ries are not breaking the law of libel every time they send out an overdue postal notice. The courts have held that a dun on a postal is libellous, and our overdue cards specifically inform the person to whom they are addressed that he owes money to the library, and threaten him with punishment if the debt is not paid. Yet although occasional delinquents remark that the law is violated by these postals, public libraries in all parts of the United States continue to send them out by thousands daily with few protests. This seems clearly a case where the public consents to a punitive measure of doubtful legality, and approves it for the public good.

The second of the two classes into which we have divided infractions of library rules consists of those that are also contrary to statute law or municipal regulation. How far shall these be dealt with purely from the library standpoint, and when shall they be turned over to the public authorities? If a small boy yells at the desk-assistant through door or window he is a disturber of the peace; if he throws at her some handy missile, such as a vegetable or a tin can, as occasionally happens in certain sections of unregenerate New York, he is technically committing an assault; shall he be handed over to the police?

Of course one must not treat trifles too seriously. Yet probably libraries have been somewhat too timid about dealing with petty offences. There is an unwillingness to drag the libraries into the police reports that seems to be a relic of the days when all libraries were haunts of scholarly seclusion.

The modern public library cannot afford to be considered an "easy mark" by those who wish to indulge in horse play or commit petty misdemeanors, and in some cases it is in danger of getting this reputation.

When we come to more serious offences, the li-

brary's duty is clearer. Theft, wilful mutilation of books, or grave disorder must of course be punished. In many cases, however, the detection of the first two offences is very difficult. Theft from open shelves is easy. For the thousands of books lost yearly in this way hardly a culprit meets punishment. I have known a professional detective to confess that the open shelf baffled him. "If you will only shut the books up," he said, "I can find out who takes 'em; but here everybody is taking out books and walking around with them." When the professional acknowledges himself beaten, what shall the librarian do? Mutilation is even harder to detect. In both these cases the offender has simply to wait his opportunity. Sooner or later there will be a second or two when no assistant is looking, even if the man is under long-standing suspicion, and in that brief time the book is slipped into the pocket or the leaf is torn out. Even when the offender is caught in the act, the magistrate may not hold, or the jury may fail to convict. A persistent mutilator of books in one of our branch libraries escaped punishment last winter because the custodian of the reading-room where he was caught did not wait until the leaf on which he was working was actually severed. The man asserted that the sharp lead pencil that he was using to separate the leaf was merely being employed to mark a place, and thus by confessing to a minor defacement he escaped the penalty of the more serious offence.

For a library that is thus forced to appeal continually to the law to protect its assistants, its users, and its collections, a manual of library law would be useful, and I am not sure that the appointment of a committee of this Association to take the matter in charge would not be eminently justified.

It is the misfortune of this paper that it has been

obliged to dwell on the darker side of library work. It is hardly necessary to remind an audience of librarians that this is not the prominent side. All users of a library are not delinquents or law-breakers, and the assistants have other and better work than to act as fine-collectors and detectives. The sombre effect of what you have just heard should have been dispelled by a paper on "Rewards and delights of library work," but this the Program Committee has seen fit to omit, probably because it is not necessary to emphasize the obvious.

HOW LIBRARIANS CHOOSE BOOKS

The form in which this subject is stated removes it from the region of ethics and brings it down to the hard realms of fact. I am not to tell you how librarians ought to select books, but how they do select them. I shall assume, however, that you do not care to have this paper filled with instances of abnormal and unprofitable selection, but that you wish to hear of the normal and the unobjectionable. Booksellers tell us that many buyers of books are governed in their choice by the color of the covers, and I have suspected that some librarians are influenced in the same way. Some librarians appear to object to works that are less than one century old; others are on record as discouraging the purchase of fiction less than one year of age. Some librarians have a prejudice against certain classes of books and an inordinate love for others.

The only things that should be considered by the librarian in buying books for his library are the needs of the community that he serves, the capability of the various books under consideration to satisfy those needs, and the financial ability of the library to secure what is needed.

I shall take up these points in order. First, the needs of the community. These are not necessarily to be measured by its demands, otherwise the librarian's labor would be considerably lightened. Unfortunately, when a community needs a given class of books very desperately it is often serenely uncon-

scious of the fact. To the librarian falls the task not only of determining what the need is and of filling it, but also of arousing a wholesome consciousness of it. In this educational work he may be, and often is, aided by the teacher, the clergyman, or even by the users of the library themselves. Hence the importance of getting in touch with all the agencies that may do work along this line. There is nothing that calls for more tact. With the children it is comparatively easy to point out a deficiency, but a direct attempt with a self-respecting adult may end in disaster, and a season or two of well-meant effort may result in weakening the librarian's influence or even in losing him his position. But one can rarely teach tact to the tactless, and tact is something that every librarian must have, so that this lopping-off process, after all, may simply be regarded as a phase of nature's elimination of the unfit. One way of ascertaining the proportional demand for various classes of literature in a community, is by examining the class-percentage of circulation. By comparing these with the corresponding volume percentages we may see whether the demands of the community are being met, and by comparison with the percentages of an ideal library we may see whether such demand ought to be met or not. Of course, the ideal is somewhat indefinite. One may accept the suggested proportions in the A.L.A. catalog, or average those of several libraries of high class; or one may construct an ideal of one's own. In any case, the ideal proportions will evidently vary with conditions of place and time. To show how this test may be applied, consider the percentage of science circulated last year in the New York Public library. This varied from 3 to 28 per cent in the various branches, and was 9 per cent for the whole library. The percentage of science on

the shelves similarly varied from 6 to 18 per cent, and was also 9 for the whole library. In our library sociology and philology are included in the science report, and the percentage of these three classes combined in the old A.L.A. catalog is 17. If this is to be taken as the standard, therefore, the library as a whole falls below it, though individual branches approach or even exceed it. As a whole, however, the demand and the supply balance pretty well. There is no doubt, however, that in this and most other libraries the demand in this class is too small and needs stimulation. Of course, this is brought up merely as an instance of how fertile this comparison of percentages is in information, and how valuable in ascertaining whether the demands of a community are supplied, and whether they ought to be supplied, along any given line.

We will assume that either in the ways indicated, or in some other, the librarian has satisfied himself that he understands what his community needs. How shall he find the books that will satisfy that need, and when they are found (or, still more, when they obtrude themselves on his notice) how shall he know that they are what they claim to be?

In order to find what he wants, the librarian naturally turns at first to such classed bibliographies as he has at hand, including publishers' trade lists. Unfortunately, books very rapidly become out of print, and if his bibliography or list is even two or three years old he cannot be sure that his work of selection is not in vain. The value of the A.L.A. catalog has been much impaired by its inclusion of out-of-print books, and as, now that it is several years old, the number of these is increasing daily, its use has become more and more vexatious, both to librarians and publishers. It is to be hoped that in the new

edition now preparing the out-of-print books will be omitted. Fortunately we now have at our disposal yearly alphabetical lists of in-print books. Such are the index to the Trade list annual and the United States catalog for American editions, and the Index to the reference catalog of current literature for British books.

If the needs of your library require that some one class should be largely replenished, you may call in expert knowledge. Some teacher or student who is a specialist in that subject is generally not hard to find, and his advice will be of the greatest value. Special bibliographies are valuable in inverse ratio to their length—a complete list of works on Egyptology, for instance, is hardly more valuable to the ordinary small library than a full, unclassified list of books in-print on all subjects.

The majority of the small library's purchases are books as currently issued. For these the *Publishers' weekly* is indispensable. Some librarians prefer to look at every book before purchasing, and arrange with publishers or booksellers to send large numbers of books weekly or even daily on approval. This, if there is sufficient time, is a good plan, but it is certainly wasteful. There are many books which we can surely reject or accept from the author and title entry in the *Publishers' weekly* as well as if the actual book were in hand. If a mistake is made it will be, or should be, discovered as soon as the book is received, and the volume can then be exchanged. Only the doubtful books need be asked for on approval, and these will generally be found to constitute a relatively small percentage of the whole.

The data on which the librarian may rely to accept or reject from a mere list of books are: 1) the author's name; 2) the title, with such brief annotation

as may follow it; 3) notices in the book magazines; 4) the publisher's name. The author stands for much —the style, method of treatment, the fitness to print of what he has to say, the readableness of his book, and so on. We all know that there are authors whom we can absolutely rely on in these respects, either for acceptance or rejection. It is thus necessary that the librarian may know the uniformly good author and the uniformly bad ones; but experience must be his guide, as this lies somewhat without the scope of the present paper. The title should tell us something about the contents of the book, but, unfortunately, the aim of the title-maker is too often not to give information but to stimulate curiosity. In some cases this is carried so far that the title of a book leaves us in absolute ignorance as to whether it is sociology, travel, or fiction. One is, therefore, generally obliged to refer to some kind of descriptive note to get the desired information. Such notes are often appended to lists and the librarian does well to remember that they are generally not intended to be critical. For criticism we must go to the reviews, and here I have always felt, and still feel, that the librarian has a real grievance. The book periodicals are many, and every daily paper has its critical page. This mass of matter is made accessible through the recently issued Index to books reviewed. Yet with it all there is not one place where the librarian may look for brief notes on current books, telling him just what he wants to know and no more, and with the confidence that the information is quite free from bias. In saying this I am quite ready to give credit to our best book reviews for their many good qualities. What I mean is, that the reviews are written for the reader or the bookseller, never for the librarian. In making use of those at his disposal the librarian must learn to dis-

criminate, to weigh authorities, and to pick out the occasional sharp needle of valuable criticism from the haystack of discursive talk.

Lastly, the selector may rely on the name of the publisher. This may tell him much or little, but it may at any rate guarantee good paper and type, and it may also assure him that the book contains no improprieties. Unfortunately, it cannot insure against dullness—publisher's readers are but mortal, and the best will occasionally reject a pearl and take in a pebble.

When all is said and done, of course the intelligent man who has read a book carefully knows more about it than he could have found out by reading all the annotations and reviews in the world. The librarian of a small library can read every book under consideration. The head of a large library cannot do this; the larger his daily or weekly order, the more he must rely on the recommendations and opinions of others, and even the books that he orders on approval he cannot read himself.

Here, perhaps, is the place to note that not every librarian is his own selector. The responsible decision in these matters rests, of course, in most libraries, with a committee of some sort; but if the librarian is one in whose judgment this committee has confidence (and no other should hold the position at all) he will have a practically free hand. For decision in regard to doubtful books, especially current fiction, some libraries have special reading committees, often composed of ladies, but it can hardly be said that the results arrived at in this way are satisfactory. It is vastly better for the librarian to select a few persons, either on his staff or outside of it, on whom he can rely to give him information, after reading a book, on specific points regarding which he may

require it. Especially in considering current fiction should the reader be able to distinguish between mere outspokenness, such as we find in the Bible or Shakespeare, and immoral or degrading tendency. The ordinary woman reader, especially the young woman, will often condemn a book for frankness when its tendency is decidedly good, and pass a clever, pleasant tale whose influence on many persons is bad, though conveyed entirely by indirection. Of course the librarian or the committee may make a general rule to exclude frankness, which, personally, I think is a mistake, though I am free to acknowledge that there are boundaries beyond which even a well-meaning writer should not be allowed to go.

Of course, I can say but a word here on the trash question in fiction. But be not, I pray, too stern a censor. When selecting for a free public library judge books largely by their fruits. If a story sends a boy out with a pistol to play robber—somewhat too much in earnest—it is surely bad; if it makes him love justice and incline to pity, it cannot be altogether out of place in a library though it may be unreal and inane. Its characters may be wooden puppets to you, while to the young reader they are heroes, full of the divine qualities of courage, sympathy, and tenderness. As the reader thinketh so is the book—not as you, wise critic, in your plentitude of knowledge, would have it to be.

The third consideration that must govern us in our choice, though I have put it last, is really the controlling one. Unless there is something in the treasury we may choose books all day, and our selection is as unavailing as the street child's choice of jewels in a shop window; and the more money one has at one's disposal, the easier it is to spend it. I must speak of the library's finances here, however, only as

they affect the librarian's choice of books. Given a specified book appropriation, the librarian must often have to decide upon the best way to spend it, and upon the proper distribution of expenditure over the year.

All these things influence his choice more or less. From one point of view it seems well to expend the greater part of the amount as soon as it becomes available, especially if a large number of pressing needs have been waiting for satisfaction. The trouble is that one cannot foresee what needs will also press for satisfaction during the coming year. Another plan is to distribute the expenditure pretty evenly without making any too strict rule in the matter.

With the first arrangement the librarian will be apt to buy a good many of the larger and more expensive works—and, perhaps, be sorry for it afterward. With the latter he will purchase more current literature and satisfy his readers better, though the general quality of his purchases may not be so high.

Perhaps a compromise may bring the best results. He who decides at the outset what reference works he can afford to buy during the year, and how much he must spend at once on replacements and duplicates, and after deducting these fixed charges from his appropriation divides the remainder into weekly or monthly portions for current purchases, will not go far wrong.

To the financial section of this discussion belongs also the question of editions. Shall the librarian choose the best or the cheapest? Which is the best and which is the cheapest for his purpose? In the first place, we may exclude the extremes. Editions de luxe have no place in the ordinary free library, and, on the other hand, we should not think of offering

to a self-respecting reader books printed on bad paper with worse type, simply because they can be purchased at a phenomenally low figure. But between these two there are many grades of beauty and durability. Here, as elsewhere, there is safety in the golden mean. As far as bindings of exceptional durability go, the question of paying extra for them depends on the use that is to be made of the book. If it will circulate so little that the ordinary binding will last twenty years, why spend money for anything stronger? Again, if it get such hard treatment that it must be replaced in a year's time, why put on it a binding that would outlive ten years of such vicissitudes? Still again, with current books of popular interest, the library cannot wait to have them put into special bindings, but for standard, popular works, which will have steady but not hard use, and which can be ordered three months before they are to be used, money spent on special bindings may be economy in the end. Here, however, we are drifting a little way from our subject.

The three points that we must take into consideration in selecting books, namely, the community's need, the determination of what books will satisfy it, and the consideration of how far the library's financial condition will allow it to go in that direction, have been treated separately, but it must be evident that they are in reality so closely connected that they act and react on each other. No one of them can in practice be considered apart from the others. Thus the first necessity of the library may be books on music, and a secondary need may be books on water supply. It may so happen, however, that a complete and up-to-date work on the latter subject, we will say, has just been issued at a moderate price, while the works on music most needed are expensive. The

result would be quite different from that reached by a consideration of the first point alone. Again, we will take the case of a large library with a book appropriation large enough to buy practically all that it wants in current literature. This fact drops point third out of consideration entirely and modifies both the others considerably. If the library wants both music and hydraulics, and has money enough for only one, we must consider carefully which can best be spared; but if the funds are at hand for both, all this thought is not needed. In like manner, even if there are funds for both, but only for one or two books on each subject, we must select the books we need most, which we need to do if we have money to buy all we want on both subjects. In short, the work of selecting is more difficult, as has been said, with a few books than with many, but the consolation must be that the result is better. The temptation, when one has plenty of money, is to let selection go by the board altogether and to garner in wheat and tares alike, trusting to the public to do the sorting.

We may be almost alarmed to learn from the physiologist of the complicated vital processes that go on within us, of which the cessation means death, and yet of which we remain in daily ignorance. These things often regulate themselves. The selection of books, like the inflation of the lungs, may be performed almost automatically, yet with substantial success. It is instructive to see how nearly the class percentages in the ordinary library approximate to the average without any conscious regulation by the librarian. The community is apt to get about what it needs in fairly good quality and without running its library into debt. Yet there can surely be no harm in analyzing a little the work of selection, nor can there be any objection to supplementing by con-

scious action work that has gone on, however well, chiefly in the combined subconsciousness of a librarian and the community.

Especially is this desirable in making the distinction, already emphasized at the opening of this paper, between what the community wants and what it needs. The fever patient who needs acid sometimes cries for a pickle, and thus cures himself in spite of his nurse; but it is more commonly the case that the patient's need is masked by some abnormal desire, and that he cries for pork-chops or lobster, or something else that would kill him. We can hardly give up the nurse, therefore, provided she knows her business, and part of that business is to realize the difference between a mere want and a vital need.

So with the librarian, the nurse of the reading public. Left altogether to themselves her patients may kill themselves with pork or lobster; it is her business to see that such an untoward event does not occur.

Those of us to whom this duty has been intrusted, whether we are librarians, trustees, or the members of book-committees, deserve both the good-will and the sympathy of the public; and, like the western organist, I pray that we may not be shot. We are doing our best.

THE WORK OF THE SMALL PUBLIC LIBRARY

We cannot too often remind ourselves of the fact that a circulating library is a distributing agency, and as such has points in common with other such agencies. The whole progress of civilization is dependent on distribution—the bringing to the individual of the thing he wants or needs. The library's activities are, therefore, in the same class with commerce, and the tendency of modern changes in the library is to make the analogy closer and closer. To recognize this fact is by no means to degrade library work. All workers fall into the two great classes of producers and distributors. Civilization can get along without neither; we must have the farmer to grow the wheat and the railway to market it; we must have the author to write the book and the publisher and the bookseller and the librarian to place it in the hands of those who can use it. The librarian is not a producer; he takes the product of other people's brains and distributes it; and his problem is how to do this most effectively.

Do not misunderstand me. There have been some recent protests against treating the library as a commercial instead of an educational institution. The free library is not a commercial institution, but it *is* an agency for distributing something, and there are also hundreds of other agencies for distributing other things. The objects and the methods of distribution are various, but certain laws apply to all kinds of distribution. Hence we may learn a good deal about

library work by examining to see what it has in common with other kinds of distribution and in what respect it differs from them.

Now, the prime factors in any kind of distribution are: 1, the products to be distributed; 2, the persons to whom they are to be distributed; 3, the distributors and methods of distribution. I know no better way of laying the basis of an efficient and successful distribution than the brief study, in order, of these three factors.

First let us consider the things that we are to distribute, namely, books. And at the outset let us remember that although these things are apparently material, as much so as butter or hats, they are much more than this. They are the vehicles for conveying ideas, so that a library is a concern for the dissemination of ideas. This brings it in line with another great intellectual and moral distributing agency—the school. In the school the distributor is more often a producer than in the library, especially in the universities, where the discoverer of new facts or laws himself imparts them to his students. Yet the school is essentially a distributing rather than a producing agency. In the school, however the means of distribution are not limited, while in the library they are pretty strictly confined to the printed book. I know that there are some people who believe that the library is growing out of such restrictions, and that its mission is to be the distribution of ideas through any and all mediums—the spoken word, in lectures; the pictures, in exhibitions of art; the museum specimen; and so on. We should welcome all these as adjuncts to our own business, and when we have mastered that business thoroughly perhaps we may take them up each on its own account. Those who love books, however, will want to see the distrib-

ution of books always at the head of the library's activities.

And it may be kept there, provided we make everything else in the library serve as guide-posts to the printed records on the shelves. A picture bulletin, for instance, may be both beautiful and useful, but it should never be an end in itself. It is the bait, if we may so speak, for the list of books that accompanies it. The pictures excite the interest of a child who sees them and he wants to know more about them. The list tells him where he can find out, and the result is increased use of the library. In like manner if you have a lecture course, or a loan exhibition in your library, see that it is made a means of stimulating interest in your books.

I have said that in distribution we bring to the individual what he wants or what he needs. That sounds a little tautological, but it is not. A man often wants whiskey when he doesn't need it at all, and conversely a boy sometimes needs a whipping—but he doesn't want it. So with the reading public. They often want fiction of a class that they do not need, and have no longing for books that would really benefit them. Here we may note a difference between the free library and all merely commercial systems of distribution. As the purpose of the latter is to make money, wants are regarded rather than needs. But even with a store there are limitations. If any one wants an injurious article—for instance, a poison or an explosive—the law steps in to prohibit or regulate. And even outside the limits of such regulation, the personal sense of responsibility to the community that governs the actions of an honest merchant will prevent his attempting to satisfy certain wants that he believes would better remain unsatisfied. So, too, certain books are without the pale

of the law—they would be confiscated and the librarian would be punished if they were circulated. Beyond these there are many books that we do not circulate simply from our sense of general responsibility to the community.

The difference between our work and that of the merchant in this regard lies chiefly in the more extended scope left for our own judgment. No librarian thinks of circulating illegal literature; his only care is to exclude such of the allowable books as he believes should not, for any reason, be placed on his shelves. Here, sometimes, popularity and usefulness part company. The librarian may yield entirely too much to the wants—the demands—of the community and neglect its needs. His aim should be to bring the wants and the needs into harmony so far as possible, to make his people want what will do them good. This might be dubbed "the whole duty of a librarian." Few, I am afraid, attain to the full measure of it, and too many fail even to realize its desirability. Of course if you can bring the full force of a reader's conscience to bear on his reading—if you can make him feel that it is his duty to read some good book that strikes him as stupid, you may make him stick to it to the bitter end, but such perfunctory reading does little good. The pleasure one gets in reading is a sign of benefits received. Even the smile of the boy who reads George Ade is a sign that the book is furnishing him with needed recreation. The pleasure experienced, we will say, in reading Shakespeare is of course of a far higher type; yet I venture to say that if that pleasure is absent, the benefit is absent too. Nine-tenths of the distaste felt for good standard books by the average reader is the result of the mistaken efforts of some one to force him to read one of these books by something in the nature

of an appeal to duty. There is no moral obligation to read Shakespeare if you do not like it, and if a friend persuades you of such an obligation you are apt to end by rightly concluding that he is wrong. But with this conclusion comes an unfortunate distaste for good literature; a conviction that standard works are all dull, and that the only kind of pleasure to be had from reading is the most superficial kind. The moral for librarians is: cultivate in your readers a taste for good literature; get them into the frame of mind and the grade of culture where they like Shakespeare and then turn them loose. No injunctions will be necessary; they will not cease to read until they have devoured the utmost sentence.

But how shall this taste be cultivated? I wish I knew. I wish I could give you a formula for causing the flower of literary appreciation to unfold. The rule is different in every case. First and foremost there must be something to cultivate. You cannot go out into the desert with watering-pot and raise strawberries or asparagus. But you can take a poor little spindling plant and dig about it and fertilize it until it waxes into a robust tree whose branches are laden with big, juicy ideas. If you are skilful enough to find out what intellectual germs there are in your reader's mind you can cultivate them little by little, but if you throw Shakespeare and Milton at the heads of all alike they will be likely to fall on barren ground. The golden rule for making your library both attractive and useful (the two things go hand in hand) is to adapt your books to those aptitudes of your readers that need and will bear cultivation.

This means that in selecting books for your library you must not disregard the demands and requests of your readers. It also means that you must have

the acuteness to detect what they ought to request. It may be, for instance, that near your library is the home of some great industry employing large numbers of intelligent mechanics who would gain both enjoyment and benefit by reading some of the technical literature bearing on their work. Only it has never occurred to them to think that this literature, much of it perhaps expensive or inaccessible, can be obtained at the public library. It is your business to get it, if you can, and to let them know that you have it and that they are welcome to read it.

Remember, too, that he gives twice who gives quickly. Much of the ephemeral literature of the day, which is purchased for recreative purposes, is rightly and properly read for curiosity. People like to read the latest book and talk to each other about it. We are all embryo critics. This desire to read the last thing out, just because it is the last, has had anathemas piled on it until it ought to be crushed, but it is still lively. I confess I have it myself and I cannot blame my neighbor if he has it too. Unless we are wholly to reject the recreative use of the library or to accept it with a mental reservation that the public shall enjoy itself according to a prescribed formula or not at all—we shall have to buy some of these books. I am afraid that otherwise some future historian of literature may say of us in parody of Macaulay's celebrated epigram on the Puritans and bearbaiting, that the twentieth-century librarian condemned the twentieth-century novel, not because it did harm to the library, but because it gave pleasure to the reader. Now, if we are going to buy this ephemeral literature, we must get it quickly or not at all. The latest novel must go on your shelves hot from the presses, or stay off. And this is true of much other literature that is not ephemeral but that de-

pends for its effect on its timeliness. It will certainly lose readers if it is not on your shelves promptly, and if it deserves readers, as much of it does, the net result is a loss to the community.

So we come next to the question of readers. How shall we get them? What kind do we want, and how shall we reach that kind? In commercial systems of distribution the merchant gets customers in two ways: by giving good quality and good measure and by advertising. Some kind of advertising is generally essential. Even if your community is a very small one it is right that you should occasionally remind it of your existence and of what you have to offer. Legitimate advertising is simply informing people where they can obtain something that they are likely to want. The address of your library should be in your railway station; in the schools; in the drug store. Your latest accessions should be announced in the local papers and bulletined in the same places. When you have an item about your library that would interest the reader send it yourself to the paper. There is nothing undignified about this. Do not forget that you are in charge of certain articles that the public needs and desires and that it is your business to let the public know it. The new-comer to your town cannot know intuitively that your library is at such and such an address; the old resident who likes to read Howells cannot ascertain by telepathy that you have just received the last volume by his favorite author. You may even send a special card of information to a reader who you know will be glad to get it.

One would think that if there was anything distinctive about our systems of distribution, commercial or otherwise, it was the great degree to which we advertise and the money that we spend in so do-

ing. But with it all, this feature in its misdirected energy and lack of method is the weak point of the whole system. Much of the money spent in advertising is devoted to attempts to get people to buy what they do not want. Any one knows that when he desires a very special or definite thing it is often impossible to find it, though it may be next door. In our library work, so far as readers are concerned, our weak points are two: first, failure to make known our presence and our work to all who might use the library; second, failure to hold our readers. These things are both serious. We ourselves see so much of libraries that we find it difficult to understand how large a proportion of any community is ignorant of them and their work. In large cities, of course, this is more likely to be the case than in small towns. Yet if you will compare the number of names on your registration list with the population you serve, even making allowance for the fact that each book withdrawn may be read by several persons, and deducting young children who cannot read, you will be surprised at the discrepancy. There are many people who do not know of your library's existence or who do not realize what it means. Your first duty is to find some way of giving them the information and of seeing that they shall not forget it.

Regarding the second failure, you may get some idea of that if you will compare the growth of your registration list with that of your circulation. The circulation never grows as fast as the membership. It may even be stationary or decreasing while new users are coming in daily. The fact is, of course, that former users are all the time dropping off. Why do they drop off? It is your business to find out and to keep them if you can. The librarian in a small community has a great advantage in this respect, for

she can know her constituency personally and keep track of them individually.

But the personal relations of the librarian and her assistants with the public belong as much in the third section of our subject as in the second. The importance of them cannot be exaggerated. I am not sure that I should not prefer a sunny-faced, pleasant-voiced, intelligent, good-tempered assistant in a tumble-down building with a lot of second-hand, badly arranged books, rather than the latest Carnegie library stocked with literary treasures if these had to be dispensed by a haughty young lady with monosyllabic answers and a fatigued expression. I know of no more exasperating duty than that of continually meeting a library public—and I know of no pleasanter one. For the public is just you and me and some other people, and like you and me it is various in its moods. The mood of the public in a library is often a reflection of that of the librarian. The golden rule here is direct personal contact; and don't forget the last syllable—tact. Don't force your services or your advice on people that neither wish nor require them, but don't forget that you may have pleasant, intellectual intercourse without offering either aid or advice. When an aged man who knows more of literature than you dreamed of in your wildest visions wants "The Dolly dialogues," don't try to get him to take "Marius the Epicurean" instead. But if you get into the habit of talking with him it may make the library seem pleasant and homelike to him, and, besides, he may tell you something that you do not know—that is a not remote and certainly fascinating possibility.

I need not say that no library can be useful or attractive unless it is properly arranged and cataloged, and unless it has a simple and effective charg-

ing system; and unless the public is admitted directly to the shelves and allowed to handle and select the books. But I do need to say—because some of us are apt to forget it—that these things are not ends in themselves, but means to an end, namely, the bringing together of the man and the book, the distribution of ideas. Do not assume that for some occult reason you must classify and catalog your library precisely like some large public library with which you are familiar. Do not assume, if you are a trained cataloger, that there is any virtue, for instance, in subject cards. One subject heading that brings the book in touch with your public outweighs a dozen that do not affect it. To bring together man and book break all rules and strike out in all kinds of new directions. Your particular locality and your particular public may have special requirements that are present nowhere else. Rules were made for the aid and comfort of the public, not for their confusion and hindrance. Methods are the librarian's tools, not his handcuffs and shackles. To do anything well we must do it with method and system; but these, like a growing boy's clothes, need frequent renewal. If your library has stopped growing and has reached senility, then the same suit will fit it year after year, but premature old age is not a good goal to strive for.

LAY CONTROL IN LIBRARIES AND ELSEWHERE*

The system by which the control of a concern is vested in a person or a body having no expert technical knowledge of its workings has become so common that it may be regarded as characteristic of modern civilization. If this seems to any one an extreme statement, a little reflection will convince him to the contrary. To cite only a few examples, the boards of directors of commercial or financial institutions like our manufacturing corporations, our railways and our banks, of charitable foundations like our hospitals and our asylums, of educational establishments like our schools and colleges, are now not expected to understand the detail of the institutions under their charge. Their first duty is to put at the head of their work an expert with a staff of competent assistants to see to that part of it. Even in most of our churches the minister or pastor—the expert head—is employed and practically controlled by a lay body of some kind—a vestry, a session or the like. Government itself is similarly conducted. Neither the legislative nor the executive branch is expected to be made up of experts who understand the technical detail of departmental work; all this is left to subordinates. Even the heads of departments often know nothing at all of the particular work over which they have been set until they have held their position for some time.

It is hardly necessary to say that this system of

*Read before the Trustees' Section of the American Library Association at the Niagara Conference, 1903.

lay control is of interest to us here and now, because it obtains in most libraries, where the governing body is a board of trustees or directors who are generally not experts, but who employ a librarian to superintend their work.

To multiply examples would be superflous. Lay control, as above illustrated, is not universal, but I postpone for the present a consideration of its antitheses and its exceptions. It looks illogical, and when the ordinary citizen's attention is brought to the matter in any way he generally so considers it. In certain cases it is even a familiar object of satire. The general public is apt, I think, to regard lay control as improper or absurd.

With the expert and his staff, who are concerned directly with the management of the institution in question, the feeling is a little different. It is more like that of President Cleveland when he "had Congress on his hands"—a sort of anxious tolerance. They bear with the board that employs them because it has the power of the purse, but they are glad when it adjourns without interfering unduly with them.

Are either of these points of view justified? Should lay boards of directors be abolished? Or, if retained, should those without expert knowledge be barred?

Now at first sight it certainly seems as if the ultimate control of every business or operation should be in the hands of those who thoroughly understand it, and this would certainly bar out lay control. I believe that this view is superficial and will not bear close analysis.

The idea that those who control an institution should be familiar with its details appears to originate in an analogy with a man's control of his own private affairs, when his occupation and income

make it necessary that he should attend to all those affairs personally. The citizen who digs and plants his own garden must understand some of the details of gardening. The man who does his own "odd jobs" about the house must be able to drive a nail and handle a paint brush. This necessity vanishes, however, as the man's interests become more varied and his financial ability to care for them becomes greater. At a certain point personal attention to detail becomes not only unnecessary but impossible. To expect the master of a great estate to understand the details of his garden, his stable, his kennels, as well as the experts to whom he entrusts them, is absurd. He may, of course, as a matter of amusement, busy himself in some one department, but if he tries to superintend everything personally, still more to understand and regulate matters of detail, he is wasting his time.

We must seek our analogy, then, both for lay control and for the attitude of the ordinary citizen toward it in that citizen's management of his private affairs. He knows his own business—or thinks he does—and he finds it hard to realize that the details of that business could ever grow beyond his personal control.

But, after all, this progress is one towards the normal. Attention to details in the case of the poor man is forced upon him. Except in rare cases, he does not really care to shovel his own snow; he would prefer to hire a man to do it, and as soon as he can he does do so. So long as his sidewalk is properly cleared he is willing to leave the details to the man who clears it. He does not care whether that man begins at the north or the south end, or whether his shovelfuls are small or large.

Here, if we examine, we shall find a common

characteristic of those kinds of work where laymen are in control—the persons for whom the work is done care very much about results; they are careless of methods so long as those results are attained. And in a very large number of cases the persons for whom the work is done will be found to be the public, or so large a section of it that it is practically a group of laymen so far as the particular work in question may be concerned.

A lay board of directors or a lay departmental head, then, is simply and properly a representative of a greater lay body that is particularly anxious for results and not particularly anxious about methods. Lay control is thus not illogical, but is the outcome of a regular and very proper development. But, as has been said, it is not the only method of controlling a great institution. An institution may be managed by a graded body of experts. So were the old guilds of craftsmen managed. So are many ecclesiastical bodies, notably the Roman Catholic Church. We may call this method of control hierarchical. It has some advantages over lay control and some disadvantages. We may imagine such a system applied to libraries. All the libraries in a state, we will say, would then be managed by the state librarian, and all these officers would be subject to the orders of the librarian of the national library, who would be supreme and accountable to no one. Without going into detailed discussion of this extremely supposititious case, we may say that the objection to it would be that the persons who are especially interested in the results of the work done are not represented in the controlling hierarchy. Where the persons interested are all experts, as in a guild of craftsmen, there can perhaps be no objection to control by experts; though even in this case we are leaving out of consid-

eration the persons, generally laymen, for whom the craftsmen do their work.

In fact, any trouble that may arise from the lay control of a body of expert workers lies just here—in the failure either of the controlling authority or the trained subordinates to recognize and keep within their limitations. It should be the function of the supreme lay authority to decide what results it wants and then to see that it gets them—to call attention to any deviation from them and to replace those who cannot achieve them by others who can. It should be the part of the expert staff of subordinates to discover by what methods these results can best be reached and then to follow out these methods.

When the lay head attempts to direct the details of method, or when the trained subordinate thinks it his duty to influence the policy of the institution, then there is apt to be trouble.

Such results are apt to follow, on the one hand, the inclusion in a board of trustees of a man with a passion for detail and a great personal interest in the work under him, but without a keen realization of the necessity for strict organization and discipline in his expert staff; or, on the other hand, from the presence in that staff of a masterful man who cannot rest until he is in virtual control of whatever he concerns himself about.

I say trouble is *apt* to follow in such cases. It does not always follow, for the organization may adapt itself to circumstances. The interested trustee may play with ease his two roles, fitting into his board as a lay member and becoming practically also a part of the expert staff. The masterful subordinate may dominate his board so as to become its dictator, and thus do away for a time with his lay control. We have all seen both these things happen,

not only in libraries, but in banks, in hospitals, in charitable institutions. In some cases it has been well that they have happened. But although an occasional stick is flexible enough to be tied into a knot, it would be hazardous to try the experiment with all sticks. Some may bend but more will break.

Is it not better to accept frankly the division of labor that seems to have been pointed out by the development of our institutions for the guidance of their management?

Boards of trustees in this case would find it necessary to decide first on the desirable results to be reached in their work. This is a phase of library discussion that has been somewhat neglected. What is the public library trying to get at? Not stated in vague terms, but in concrete form, so that the trustees can call the librarian to account if he fails to accomplish it? It is only fair to the librarian that he should be informed at the outset precisely what he is expected to do, and then it is only fair that he should be left to do it in his own way.

This is an unoccupied field, and it would be an eminently proper one for the Trustees' Section of the American Library Association. We librarians should be very glad to know just what you expect us to accomplish, for on that depends our manner of setting to work. Do you wish us to aim at decreasing the percentage of illiteracy in the community? or the arrests for drunkenness? Are we to strive for an increased circulation? And will an absolute increase be satisfactory, or must it be an increase proportionate to population? Is it definitely demanded of us to decrease our fiction percentage? Shall we, in any given case, devote our attention chiefly to the home use or the reference use of the library? Shall we favor the student or the ordinary citizen? These

questions, of course, cannot receive a general answer; they must be decided differently in different cases, but at least we may agree on the type of question that it is admissible to answer at all and on the degree of detail to which it is permissible to go in stating a requirement.

For instance, is it admissible for a board to say to its librarian, "The results that we require you to show include the following: A well-ordered collection of books classified according to the Dewey system, bound in half duck and distributed with the aid of the Browne charging system?" I think it will be granted that this would be an attempt to control the details of method in the guise of a statement of desired results. But where shall we draw the line? How specific may be the things that a board may properly require of its expert staff? That is the question whose solution by this Section would be an inestimable benefit to all libraries and librarians. At present there is wide difference of opinion and of practice on this point. Many people would not agree at all with the limitations that have just been laid down; even those who do agree would differ widely over their interpretation.

There is hardly time to anticipate and meet criticism. I shall be reminded, I suppose, that the funds for carrying on the library's work are in the hands of the trustees, and that one of the main objects of their existence is to see that the money is honestly spent, not stolen or wasted. How can they do this without close oversight of methods? To this I would reply that this important function of the board is distinctly the requirement of a result, that result being the honest administration of the library. The method by which it may be administered most hon-

estly is best left to the expert head. Naturally, if evidence of peculation or waste comes before the board the librarian will be held to account as having failed to achieve the required result of honest administration. In this and in other respects the necessity that the board should know whether or not the desired results are being attained means that the work of the executive officer should be followed with attention. It must be evident, however, that this does not involve control and dictation of methods.

It must also be remembered that what has been said refers only to the administrative control of the institution. The duties of trustees as custodians of of an endowment fund, if such there be, or in soliciting and receiving contributions as well as other financial considerations, are separate from this and have not been considered.

Again, I shall be told that the head of the executive staff is not only a subordinate but also an expert adviser of his board. This is true; and as a consulting expert it is his duty to give advice outside of his own administrative field if he is asked for it. It may even be his duty to give it unasked occasionally, but this comes very near to the interference that I have deprecated. He who would tread this borderland must tread softly. On the other hand, the expert may and should ask the advice of members of his board as individuals or of the board as a whole when he needs it and when he feels that it would give him confidence or strengthen his hand. In this whole matter there is a clear distinction between the advisory and executive function on one hand and on the other.

In short, the view taken in this paper may be briefly summed up as follows: Lay control in libra-

ries and elsewhere is a logical and proper development. It would not, on the whole, be well for one who should wish to endow a library to make an expert librarian sole trustee for life with power to select his successor. That would be a fine thing for the librarian, but it would be neither desirable nor proper. It is well that the trustees should be responsible representatives of the lay public, for whose benefit the library is to be conducted. But as the public is interested chiefly in results, the trustees should confine themselves largely to the indication and requirement of these results, leaving methods in the hand of their expert staff of subordinates. And it is eminently desirable that librarians should hear from a representative body of trustees some expression of opinion regarding the extent of this limitation.

THE WHOLE DUTY OF A LIBRARY TRUSTEE: FROM A LIBRARIAN'S STANDPOINT*

At a former meeting of this section the present writer had the honor of reading a paper in which he made an attempt to show that the trustee of the public library is the representative of the public and, as such, interested especially in results as distinguished from methods, which are the business of the librarian as an expert administrator. In making this distinction I urged trustees to give particuar attention to the formulation of such results as they should consider desirable, that librarians on their part might confine themselves more to the consideration of appropriate methods for the attainment of these results. So far as I know, however, this work remains to be accomplished, and it is because I still think it desirable that I welcome this opportunity of restating the situation and making some attempt to illustrate it and to indicate what may and should be done in the premises. According to this view it is not only the duty of a board of trustees to consider what should be the results aimed at by its library, to formulate its conclusions, to communicate them to the librarian and then to hold him responsible for their attainment, but everything that the board may properly do may be brought under this head; and to state it broadly is therefore to set forth comprehensively the "whole duty of a trustee," which may serve as the justification of my somewhat ambitious title.

The layman's influence, control exercised by and

* An address before the Trustees' Section of the American Library Association, Narragansett Conference, 1906.

through the viewpoint of the general public, is a most excellent thing, however much the expert may chafe under it. This is apparent in every art and craft. The expert, the man who has made a study of technique, of the way to do it, comes more and more to think of the method rather than the result—to elaborate detail and manner and to take keen joy in their recognition and comparison. So it is with the worker in art or in literature, and thus we have what are called painter's pictures and musician's music and poet's poems—works that interest and delight those whose business it is to produce them, but which leave the general reader or hearer cold. It is evident that these, no matter how valuable or interesting they may be from one standpoint, are not the highest examples of their class. Better are the crude attempts of native genius which kindle enthusiasm and arouse the best impulses while breaking every canon of art. Best of all, of course, are the works where the technique and the result are both admirable and where the technical resources of the workers are brought to bear consciously, directly and successfully upon the attainment of the result. And to produce such works two forces must generally cooperate—the trained skill and enthusiasm of the artist and the requirement of the general public that his work must appeal to them, interest them, take them a message. Now this is of interest to us here and now, because, just as we occasionally have "composer's music" and "architect's buildings," so, it is to be feared, we may have librarian's libraries—institutions that are carried on with the highest degree of technical skill and with enthusiasm and interest and yet fail of adequate achievement because the librarian makes the mistake of regarding the technique as an end instead of as a means—of thinking that if his

methods be precise, systematic and correct, good results must needs follow, instead of aiming directly at his results and adapting his methods to their attainment.

It is here that the trustee, as the official representative of the general public, may apply a corrective influence. In the case of the artist or the writer this influence is brought to bear generally in a financial way—by a wealthy patron who will order a picture or statue provided it accords with his own ideas —by hostile criticism, public or private, that drives away purchasers. In a public library, public opinion rarely makes itself felt in this way; indeed, it could do so only in cases where disregard of the public amounted to mismanagement and led to the reduction of appropriations or the discharge of the librarian. Public criticism, as in the press, might also affect a librarian's course; it undoubtedly often does, but it need not; and he may safely disregard it as a general thing. When, however, his board of trustees calls him to account, he must listen, and when it tells him what he is expected to do, it is then his business to devise the best way to do it.

A rough classification and analysis of the results that a librarian may be expected to accomplish may not be out of place here. We may treat them under four heads: financial, educational, recreational and social.

Financial results.—A library must show a good material return for money expended. By this is meant that its books and supplies must be purchased at fair rates, its salaries reasonably proportioned to quantity and quality of services rendered, its property economically administered. A board of trustees is derelict in its duty if it does not require all this, and also hold its librarian rigidly to such requirement.

This means that it must, along the broadest lines, know the ratio of expenditure to return in these various departments; it does not mean that the librarian should be hampered by the prescription of details. It means, for example, that the expert administrator should be called to account if his bills for lighting and heating are excessive, and that he should be asked to show cause why they should not be kept within bounds; it does not mean that he should be required to use lights of a certain candle-power or turn off the light in a particular room at a given hour. In most libraries, the making of annual appropriations under designated heads and the requirement that cause shall be shown for a transfer from one of these categories to another, are sufficient measures of financial control.

Among the financial results that have already attracted the attention of the public and hence engaged the interest of boards of trustees is the attainment of a proper ratio of expenditure for books to the expense of administration. This ratio is generally regarded by the lay critic as abnormally small, but trustees have generally acquiesced in the librarian's explanation of the causes that seem to him to make it necessarily so. It is undoubtedly the trustee's duty to call his expert administrator's attention to this and all other seeming discrepancies in expenditure, and to make sure that they are not carrying the library too far toward technical perfection at the expense of practical efficiency.

Educational results.—It is only right to require that a library should be able to show that it is increasing the educational content of the community, or raising its educational standard, or at least that it is exerting itself to do so, both directly and by cooperation with other agencies, especially with the

public schools. A board of trustees is certainly justified in ascertaining by any means in its power whether this is being done, and if not, in asking an explanation of its librarian. Does everyone in the community know where the library is? Is everyone who would be benefited by it making use of it? Is it a help to the schools, and do the teachers recognize this fact? Does the community in general regard it as a place where material for the acquisition of knowledge is stored and discriminatingly given out? These are questions that can be settled not so much by the examination of statistics as by ascertaining the general feeling of the community. It is much easier for a trustee to find this out than it is for a librarian; and trustees, both individually and as a body, should continually bear in mind the value to them of information along this line. Librarians are apt to talk a good deal about the educational function of the library as an adjunct and supplement to the school. It is to their credit that they have made it an educational force not under pressure but voluntarily, as a recognition of the necessities of the situation. But where such necessities have not yet been recognized or where their full import has been slow of realization, the educational side of library work remains undeveloped. Let the board of trustees notify its executive officer that it expects him to look to this feature of his work as thoroughly as to the condition of his building or the economical expenditure of his lighting appropriation, and all such institutions will experience a change of heart.

Recreational results.—Nothing is more important to the physical and moral health of a community, as of an individual, than the quality of the recreation that it takes. The question of whether recreation is or is not taken need not be considered. Everyone takes

recreation; if means for the healthy normal variety are not provided, the other kind will occupy its place. And the healthy normal individual—child or adult—prefers the first kind if he can get it. With the physical variety the library has nothing to do; but to purvey proper intellectual recreation is one of its most important provinces. Is this adequately done? Is it done at all? Does the librarian exalt other functions of his great machine and neglect this one? The large amount of fiction circulated in most public libraries is generally taken as an indication that the quantity of its recreational content is considerable, whatever may be said of the quality; but this is a very superficial way of looking at the matter. There is educational material of the highest value in fiction and nearly every non-fiction class contains books of value for recreation. Moreover, what may be recreation to one man may be the hardest kind of study to another. The enthusiast in higher mathematics may extract as pure amusement from a book on the theory of functions as his neighbor would from the works of "John Henry." In short, it is very difficult to separate education and recreation. Good work presupposes good play. It is simply our duty to view the library as a whole and to decide whether it contains the means of satisfying so much of the community's demand for recreation as is wholesome and proper. Whether it does this may be judged from the freedom with which the library is used for recreational purposes compared with other agencies. A proper admixture of physical and intellectual amusement is required by everybody; is the library doing its share toward the purveying of the latter form? I do not know any better way of finding out than for the library trustees to use their eyes and ears, nor any more effective remedy for inadequate results along this line than

the pressure that they can bring to bear on their librarian.

Social results.—Under this head we may group a very large number of results that are apt to be overlooked or taken for granted. They may perhaps be summarized in the statement that the library should take its proper place in the institutional life of the community. What this is will depend largely on the community's size and its social content. In many small towns the library naturally assumes great social importance; in a city it may be relatively of less weight, though perhaps its influence in the aggregate may be even greater. Whether it is doing this part of its work properly may probably be best ascertained by comparison with the work of other institutions that go to build up the social fabric—the church, the home, the club, the social assembly. Does the dweller in the community turn as naturally to the library for intellectual help as he does to the church for religious consolation? Does he seek intellectual recreation there as he seeks physical recreation at his athletic club or social entertainment at a dance? And so seeking, does he find? Does he come to regard the library as his intellectual home and the librarian and his assistants as friends? What, on the other hand, is the attitude of the library staff toward the public? Is it inviting or repellent, friendly or coldly hostile, helpful or indifferent? Here is a whole body of results that are, in a way, the most important that a library can produce, and yet it is impossible to set them down in figures; they can scarcely even be expressed in words. The social status of a library is like a man's reputation or his credit; it is built up by thousands of separate acts and by an attitude maintained consistently for years; yet a breath may blast it. Of this position a board of trustees should

be particularly proud and its members should do their best to uphold it. If they realize by those many delicate indications that we all recognize but cannot formulate, that the library is failing to maintain it, the librarian should hear from them. They should let him know that something is wrong and that they expect him to right it. If he does not know how, that is an indication that his personality and ability are parts of the failure.

This, then from the writer's standpoint, is the whole duty of a trustee—or rather of a board of trustees—to see clearly what it wants, to give the librarian his orders, and to require an accounting.

I am frequently struck with the attitude of librarians toward their boards of trustees, not as shown in their public acts, but as revealed in conversation among themselves. A board is apt to be adjudged good or bad, satisfactory or unsatisfactory, as it takes a more or less passive part in the administration of the library. If it acts simply to approve what the librarian does and to see that he gets the necessary funds, it is regarded as ideal. All that most librarians seem to want is to be given plenty of money and then to be let alone. This is a view of the whole duty of a trustee with which I do not sympathize. On the other hand, it is not to be denied that boards of trustees have done much to encourage this attitude because when they are really active in their interest their activity looks too closely to detail. They are then apt to interfere in the regulation of methods rather than to require results and afterward ascertain whether and in what degree these results have been reached.

A board of trustees is the supreme authority in a library. I would have this fact realized in its fullest meaning by both trustees and librarian. And I

would have the board exercise its supremity in what may be called the American manner. The people constitute the supreme authority both in Great Britain and in the United States. In the former country, however, this authority is symbolized by the person of a monarch, who reigns but does not govern; and the minutest details of administration are attended to by the people in the persons of their parliamentary representatives and of the cabinet, which is, in effect, a parliamentary committee. In this country, on the other hand, we entrust administrative details very largely to our chief magistrate and his personally appointed advisers. We tell him what to do and leave him to do it as he thinks best; and though Congress is disposed at times to interfere in the details of administration, these usually consist more largely of departmental decisions and rulings than of definite provisions of a legislative act. The President of the United States is the people's general executive officer and administrative expert in precisely the same sense that the librarian occupies that office in his own library. Congress and the board of trustees bear similar relations to these officers. And although this may be carrying the comparison of small things with great to the point of absurdity, it shows clearly that the American idea of delegated authority is to make the authority great and the corresponding responsibility strict. That the best results have been attained in this country by following out this plan in all fields, from the highest government positions to the humblest commercial posts, seems to be undoubted; and I believe that the library has been a conspicuous example.

Appoint a good man, then, as your administrative expert; give him a free rein, but not in the sense of following him to dictate the whole policy of your

library. Decide for yourselves the broad lines of that policy, relying on your own common sense together with his expert advice; require him to follow out those lines to a successful issue, and hold him responsible for the outcome. So doing you shall fulfil, so far as the limited vision of one librarian enables him to see, the whole duty of a trustee.

THE DAY'S WORK: SOME CONDITIONS AND SOME IDEALS*

What is the library for? What are we, who are in charge of it, to do with it? What point are we striving to reach, and how shall we get there?

First of all, the library is a collection of books. Books are to be used by reading them. The whole machinery of the library, its buildings, its departments, its regulations, its disciplined staff, are to bring together the reader and the books. Whatever auxiliary work the library may undertake, this must be its first task.

Now to what end is this done? A book from the material point of view is so much leather, paper and printer's ink, but on the intellectual and spiritual side it is a storage battery of ideas. To put a book into a reader's hand is to complete a mysterious circuit between the writer's and the reader's mind. This charging of the mind with ideas is what we call education. To the physiologist it is a mere modification of brain structure; to the economist and the historian it spreads further out; it is a modification of the individual's action toward the whole world; it is the alteration of the world's present status and future history. Education cannot be accomplished by books alone; it can even be accomplished wholly without them; but if they are used properly, there is no one agent that can do more for education than these devices for the storage and transmission of ideas. That the library is an educational institution is now gen-

* Presidential address before the New York Library Association, Lake Placid, September 21, 1903.

erally recognized. It is common to call it an adjunct to the school, or to speak of it as continuing the work of the school. That the school and the library should work hand in hand where it is possible, goes without saying. But I think we may properly object to any phraseology that implies the subordination of the library to the school. The library stores books and makes them available. Part of the school's work also is to make available the contents of books. The library may continue the work of the school; but so in some cases may the school merely complete the work of the library. Many a student has received his first inspiration and instruction in the library and has been thereby stimulated to enter a regular course of study. It is better to let the library stand on its own merits as an instructional agent. The difference between it and the school, fundamentally, is that the library's educational energy is chiefly potential while that of the school is, or should be, dynamic. Yet though the library is only a potential force—energy in storage—the library plus the librarian may and should be dynamic too. We then have in both school and library the book and the teacher, with the difference that in the school the book is only the teacher's tool, while in the library the librarian exists to care for the book, to place it in his hands who needs it, and to make it effective.

But when we have emphasized the educational side of the library's activity we have by no means exhausted its field. Its recreative function is hardly less important. A very large proportion of the library's users go to it for recreation or relaxation. They obtain this, of course, in the same way that they obtain education from books, namely, by the acquisition of new ideas or mental images. The recreation comes in from the fact that these ideas temporarily

distract the attention from other ideas connected with daily work and worry, and that they ease the brain in the same way that a strained muscle may be eased by gentle exercise. Evidently it is impossible to draw a line between these two classes of a library's activity. A zoological or a botanical garden is an educational institution, so is an art museum. Yet the large majority of those who go to them do so for amusement, and the educational benefits obtained are incidental. Those benefits, however, are none the less real, and it would evidently be impossible to give separate statistics of those who have made educational and recreative use of the institution. Yet we find people trying to do this very thing in the case of the public library, which case is quite comparable with those stated above. It is assumed, in the first place, that the use of fiction is purely recreative, while that of non-fiction is educational; and, in the second place, that the recreative use of the library is to be condemned or at least discouraged, in comparison with the other. That either of these can be sustained is very doubtful. The attempted subordination of the recreative work of the library to the educational is at best invidious. Each has its place in the scheme of things and comparison in this case is worse than odious, it is misleading. Further, it is positively impossible to draw a line between educational and recreative books. So far as motives go, one may read Gibbon for entertainment and Madame de Stael's "Corinne" as an Italian guide book. So far as results are concerned, the intelligent reader always acquires new ideas as he reads; and in most cases the very same idea may and does have both an educational and a recreative function. But although we can draw no line, it is quite possible to pick out books on the one side and on the other, and to assert that these are

read chiefly for educational purposes and those for recreation. On which side shall the library throw its influence? There are many good librarians who feel that the popular tendency is too strong towards recreation and that the library should restore the balance by throwing its weight on the other side. Others see in the popular desire for recreative reading only a hopeful reaction from the mental tension and overwork with which, as a nation, we are doubtless chargeable. Between these two points of view I believe that the equilibrium of the public library is safe, and that it is in no danger of developing unduly either on the recreative or on the educational side.

Personally I have never felt that the user of libraries or any other type of the average American was in danger from too much recreation. If there is any use of a library that may have a vicious tendency it is its use for pure pastime in the etymological sense—the reading of books with absolutely no aim at all save to make the time pass. Now to make time pass pleasantly or profitably may be a most legitimate object. Not that, and not any lawful aim is objectionable. But aimlessness—the lack of an aim—the taking out of books to skim or to glance at, or to look at the pictures, with no desire for amusement, or profit, or anything else—that is certainly worthy of condemnation. There is more of it than we know, and it constitutes a menace to our intellectual future. Newspaper reading fosters it, but not necessarily. Newspaper reading with an aim is far better than aimless skimming and skipping of a literary classic, and I should rather see a boy of mine reading the most sensational dime novel he could lay hands on, with the definite desire and intention of finding out how Bloody Bill got his revenge, than lazily turning over the pages of Scott with no idea of what the story was

about. The first would be the case of a good reader and a bad book; the second that of a good book and a bad reader. The library can easily deal with the book; it cannot so easily manage the reader, though it may try to do so. In the case of the bad reader the storage battery of ideas has lost its connection. It would be well for some of us if we should forget for the moment the difference between fiction and non-fiction and should try to mend this broken link.

And now a word about ourselves. What are we, who are engaged in this work, laboring for? Why are we working, and what do we expect to accomplish? In answering this question it will be better for us to free ourselves entirely from the bondage of words that mean nothing. Some of us—I hope very many of us—are in the library work solely because we love it and cannot keep out of it. Others are trying with more or less success to persuade themselves that this is their reason. Still others cannot truthfully say that they have had a "call to library work," and some of these are conscientious enough to fear that they are in the wrong place and that the work is suffering thereby. To these I desire to address a word of consolation and encouragement. The impression is very general that the greatest work of the greatest minds had no motive but the productive impulse. The poet, according to this view, sings because he cannot help singing; the artist paints solely to satisfy the creative longing within him; the musician composes for the same reason. Now the fact is that a man who is capable of great work, or of ordinarily good work, may produce it under a variety of impulses. Some act more strongly on one man; others on another; or the same man may be more susceptible to a given impulse at one time or place than at another. Without a doubt, many of our immortal works were the result

of simple inability to keep from producing them. But just as certainly, others were the work of men who had to school themselves by long practice and then to hold themselves to the work with iron determination. "Genius" says Carlyle, "is nothing but an infinite capacity for taking pains." To which a modern critic replies, "On the contrary, genius is an infinite capacity for doing things without taking any pains at all." Both are right. There are both these kinds of genius —and many others. The writer who attempts to bind down genius to rules and formulae will have a hard task. And what is true of genius is also true of ordinarily good work—the work that you and I are trying to do in our libraries. Some of us do it easily because we cannot help it; others do it with more or less difficulty under the pressure of one or another need. One, though the work itself comes hard to him, loves the result to be accomplished; another, perhaps, is toiling primarily to support himself and those dependent on him. What of that? We have been placed where we are, to secure certain results. We want the help of every one who can contribute a share of honest, intelligent work toward the attainment of these results, and we shall not ask for motives or inquire into the exact amount of effort that was necessary, provided the work has been done and done well.

I have the greatest sympathy for the conscientious library assistant who feels that she ought to love her work in the same way perhaps that she loves music or skating, or a walk through the autumn woods, and who, because she does not sit down to paste labels or stand up to wait on the desk with the feeling of exhilaration that accompanies these other acts, is afraid that library work is not her métier.

Such workers should possess their souls in peace. It is very common for routine work to pall upon him who does it, and we are all apt to think that no work

but ours has any routine. Our weary eyes see only the glorious moments of success in the lives of other toilers; we are blind to the years of drudgery that led to them. The remedy is to look forward. You may not enjoy climbing the mountain step by step, but the view from the summit is glorious. And if to sustain yourself on the climb you think of the bread and cheese that you have in your lunch basket, I cannot see that there is aught to complain of.

All over the world there are workers who feel that they are not worthy of their work. It is dull; it palls on them. But if their lot had only been different! If their work had been that of the musician or the artist! Then toil would become pleasure, and the hours that now drag heavily would flit on wings. Very little of this feeling is justifiable, and these dissatisfied workers will do better work if they are made to realize that it is only the favored few who can bring enthusiasm to the daily routine. The most that we can ask of the average worker is a conviction of the usefulness of his work and a determination to make it as useful as possible. More: such a determination honestly lived up to is sure to beget interest—that concrete interest in one's work that is worth much more, practically, than an ideal love for it. The woman who goes into slum work impelled only by a a vague love for humanity is apt to give up after a little when she discerns that humanity in the concrete is offensive in so many ways. But if she forces herself to keep on, and to make herself as useful as possible, there comes the personal interest that will bind her to her task and that will increase its usefulness. So it is with library work; you need not love it ideally to succeed in it; you need only buckle down to it until you feel the personal interest that will carry you through triumphantly.

And what is it all about? In the broadest sense, as I have already said, we librarians are the purveyors of ideas stored up in books. These ideas are more to man than mere education—they are life itself. Life is growth, not stagnation—it involves change and acquisition. "Life is change," says Cardinal Newman, "and to be perfect, one must have changed many times." To contribute the opportunity and the stimulus for such change is our business. The child cries out to his environment—"Give me ideas and experiences; good and pleasurable if you can, bad or painful, if you must, but give me ideas and experiences." Part of this craving it is the duty of the public library to satisfy. The craving may grow less keen as we grow older, but it never really ceases to exist. To satisfy that craving in legitimate ways and to guide and control it if we can is our business, stated in the broadest possible terms. That is what we are aiming at. The librarian should be the broadest minded of mortals. He should be a man in the widest sense—to him nothing human should be alien.

This is decidedly broad and correspondingly vague, Being so, it may be interpreted by every worker in the way that appeals to him most. To one, the educational work of the library will make the strongest appeal; to another its recreational function. One may prefer to lay stress on the guidance of children's reading; another on reference work with adults. These are all phases of one and the same general class of acts—the imparting of ideas by means of books—and there is no reason why each worker should not gain interest in that work by and through the particular phase that appeals to him.

"I wish," says one of James Lane Allen's characters, "that some virtue—say the virtue of truthfulness—could be known throughout the world as the

unfailing mark of the American. Suppose the rest of mankind would agree that this virtue constituted the characteristic of the American! That would be fame for ages." We librarians, in like manner, not only wish but strive to make some one virtue characteristic of our work—say the virtue of usefulness. "As useful as a librarian," "As indispensable as the public library"—these are not yet, I am afraid, household phrases. But why should we not make them so?

LIBRARY STATISTICS

It is a valuable exercise to examine into the origin and uses of the things that we have been accustomed to take for granted and to regard almost as part of the accepted order of nature. The result will often be startling and it will always be salutary, if the examiner be sane and conservative. Therefore a very good way to begin a discussion of statistics is to query whether they are of present value at all, or whether they are old fashioned rubbish and had better be discarded.

Statistics are the numerical statements of results or facts. Now thousands of individuals and thousands of bodies—families, clans, associations, that accomplish much in this world, go on very well without keeping any record at all of what they do. This is indisputable. On the other hand we shall see that as work is done well and carefully there is an increasing disposition to make and keep a record of results; and as the work extends in scope and complexity, the record, too, becomes more complex. Take, for instance, the record of so apparently simple a transaction as the payment and receipt of money. The individual who has little of it to receive and disburse may go all his life without keeping so much as a cash account, much less a set of books. He may even spend a considerable income in the same way, including the maintenance of a household and the support of a family, and he may, on the whole, do it wisely and well. Yet of two men of the same means, one of whom should conduct his affairs thus, while the other kept

a rational system of household and personal accounts, the latter would universally be regarded as pursuing the better course. And as we pass from this to the conduct of a business we recognize that the man who engages in commerce without keeping proper accounts is a fool and courts failure, and that the larger the business and the more widespread the interests, the more complicated and extensive must be the book-keeping. A large commercial concern may thus employ a special department with a large staff of men simply to keep record of its financial transactions. This is probably the most ancient kind of statistical record and the one whose usefulness is most generally recognized.

In like manner another common and useful statistical record—the inventory, or list of articles on hand —although not commonly and regularly taken by the individual, becomes absolutely necessary in the smallest kind of business, and without it the merchant can have absolutely no idea of whether he is conducting his business at a profit or a loss. When we go on further and examine the conduct of great commercial or manufacturing concerns we find that the statistical department becomes of increasing importance, the details collected by it multiply and the staff of persons whose sole duty it is to collect and to discuss them may be very considerable. That a great manufacturing company would waste time and money on a task of no value is inconceivable, and there is thus a very strong presumption that statistics are worth something. Even where bodies of men have so little power or corporate action that they cannot collect statistics for themselves, it is generally deemed a proper expenditure of the public money to do so at the common cost, hence governments maintain great census bureaus, whose duty it is not only to count heads every

few years but to tell the farmer how much he raises, the merchant how much merchandise he exports, and so on.

Is the free public library an institution that will be benefited by the collection, tabulation and discussion of the results of its work, so far as they can be numerically expressed? What are the objects of such collection in the instances above enumerated? In the first place, they are to satisfy mere curiosity. If such curiosity is trivial, the collection of statistics is evidently useless, and I am afraid that more than a little of it, public and private, falls under this head. But curiosity, even when it goes no further, may be perfectly legitimate. Especially is this so about one's own affairs. When a man is attempting anything he is naturally curious to know whether he has succeeded or not; and to find out, if possible, precisely how far he has gone in the desired direction. He may have property enough to support him beyond all doubt, but it is quite right that he should want to keep a list of his stocks and bonds and to know whether they have risen or fallen in value during the year. Still further, curiosity about other people's affairs may be legitimate, as, for instance, when one is responsible for their proper conduct in greater or less degree. In the same way the trustees of a free public library, representing the public at large, by whom the library is supported and carried on, have a right to know all possible particulars regarding the way in which their librarian has carried on his work and the results he has reached in it, and the municipality in turn should require of the trustees a strict account of the funds that they have administered. All this information, as far as it can be stated numerically, constitutes a mass of statistics, and this one reason amply justifies its collection and would justify a much

larger number of tables than is usually given in a library report, provided only that the information is to the point and is or should be in public demand.

But we cannot stop here. A free library, it is true, is not a money-making concern, but it certainly should be run on business principles. The public puts into it a large sum of money and has a right to expect certain returns, which are none the less definite that they cannot themselves be represented in dollars and cents. The library statistic books are therefore, in a way, the records of the business; they show whether it is being conducted conservatively or wastefully, at a profit or at a loss. And as all these record books are open, they enable us, or should enable us to make instructive comparisons between the methods and results of one institution and those of another.

But even this is not all. It is a maxim of this strenuous age that all things are good or bad according to the results to which they lead, not in the narrow sense that "the end justifies the means," but in the broader sense that we must know things by their fruits. The man who said "I go, sir," and went not, was judged by his acts, not by his words; and no matter how much knowledge we store up and how many tables of data we collect we shall be derelict in our duty if we regard this as an end in itself. The state of mind in which the Mahatma spends his life in impassivity, contemplating inward things and making no outward motion, may have certain advantages, but it is not consonant with the spirit of this age and this land. By which I mean that when we have found out something from our statistics we must do something with it. More; we must so direct our statistical investigations that they bear directly on a possible course of action. This is done by the great manufacturing concerns that maintain statistical depart-

ments; but we all use statistics in this way. If a boy wants to go to the circus he first looks through his pockets to see whether he has enough cash. Here is the germ of a statistical investigation conducted for the specific purpose of getting information on which future action is to be based. Here sometimes, where the opportunity of collecting statistics is very great, and expense is no object, is a good excuse for gathering a great deal that would seem to be useless, with the expectation that some of it may turn out to be interesting and may suggest some line of work that had not previously been thought of. To go as far as this, the institution must be large and rich.

But how many of us do anything with our statistics? How many collect statistics along special lines to assist in deciding what we shall do along those lines? How many of us, rather, consider that, when our statistics have been collected a disagreeable task has been done, and put them behind us till the year rolls round again?

Perhaps we have had enough now of the philosophy of statistics. Let us see what concrete kinds of statistics are necessary and in what order of importance.

First comes an itemized account of receipts and expenditures. This is so obvious that it is not generally considered as library statistics at all. But it may and should be extended a little. Look at all your other tables of statistics through financial spectacles. Compare your receipts with your population. How much does your town give per capita for library work? Compare this figure with the same for other towns. Compare your expenditures with your circulation. How much has your library cost you per book circulated? Compare your expenditure for books with the number purchased and tell us the average cost of

a book and how this compares with the cost in former years. Do this for a half-dozen other phases of your work and put the result in as many brief, crisp sentences. If you haven't room in your report, cut out some of the platitudes; we all insert them in moments of weakness and, once in, it sometimes requires an earnest search to detect and expunge them.

Next in importance comes an account of your books—how many there are in the library, on what subjects, and how many have been added during the year in each subject; how many gifts you have had; how many books have been lost. This involves taking a careful inventory at least once a year. You see I am putting this before any account of circulation. A good many libraries take no inventory or take it at too infrequent intervals, because they have no time. You might as well say you have no time to keep a cash account. This is business and comes first. Leave off counting your circulation if you must, but keep count of the public property in your care as conscientiously as you keep count of the money in your cash drawer. If you can do nothing else make a simple enumeration of volumes without taking account of classes, but do it thoroughly. The trouble with the inventory is that, like the old-fashioned housecleaning, it is usually done all at once and becomes an annual bugbear. One way of making it easier is to spread it over the year, counting and reporting one class every month and treating it as a part of the regular routine. In this category of statistical records comes the list of your books, which you must surely have in some form, even though you may not have accession book, shelf list and dictionary catalog. For statistical purposes indeed, the last-named may be left out of account.

Next in order of importance come statistics of

circulation. You should know how many books are given out for home use every day and how these are distributed among the classes. Do not adhere too strictly to your classification. Subdivide and combine your classes so that the results will be of interest to your particular public. Always remember in discussing these statistics that they are not so much a record of work done as a rough proportional indication of that work, and are therefore of relative, not of absolute interest. You are not to attach any meaning to the fact, taken by itself, that your circulation was 5280 for the month of May, but if you find that it was only 3120 in the previous May you may justly conclude that the work of your library is increasing.

In the circulation category comes the record of the hall or library use of books, the reference use, and the books outstanding at any particular time. Hall use is very difficult to keep in a free access library, but an attempt should be made to do so. It is not quite synonymous with reference use. If a man sits down in your library and actually reads a novel without taking it home, that is hall or library use, but not reference use. If he merely refers to the same book to find out about some character, that is reference use. It is evidently hard to separate these and many libraries do not attempt to do so. In others, where there is a separate reference room, any use of books in this room is recorded as "reference use." The number of books outstanding should be taken at least once a month, simply by counting the cards in the circulation tray. This item is very easy to ascertain, very accurate, and is interesting and useful in more than one way.

Last in the list of the necessary items of statistics comes that of readers or users of the library—the most interesting in some ways, and the most disap-

pointingly vague. Presumably your users fill out some kind of blank form of application and have their names entered in a book. It is therefore easy to give, as is usually done, the total registration and its annual increase. But this is evidently not the number of actual users of the library. Who are the "actual users"? The expression itself is vague. To be complete you should have the numbers of those who have used the library within one, two, and three days, and so on back indefinitely. There is no place where the line may be drawn between "live" and "dead" cards. But such statistics are too elaborate to collect regularly, so that the ordinary library leaves this subject in its pristine mistiness. There are some pretty variations of it, however, which may be gone into if there is time. For instance, how are your users divided, according to occupation? This you can ascertain from your applications provided the applicant is required to state his occupation. Here again the result is for registered users, not actual users. Again, how are your users distributed topographically? The result of this inquiry may be shown graphically on a map, and it is particularly valuable when one is thinking of moving or of establishing a branch; but it takes more time than is at the disposal of most librarians.

Here, I believe, ends the enumeration of necessary kinds of statistics. In each kind the collection may be reduced to a minimum; but the librarian must, if the library is to be maintained at all, keep a cash account, count the books, and make some kind of a list of them. Also, if at all possible she or he must be able to tell how many books are circulated and how many users' names are on the books. This is the minimum; the maximum is fixed only by considerations of time and usefulness. First among the kinds of

statistics that are not absolutely necessary, but interesting and often useful, is that of routine work done —letters written, visits made, cards written. This may easily be carried to excess. Then there is the enormous class in which the data are obtained not directly, but by comparison of other data. To this class belong the financial comparisons already noted. For instance, by comparing the circulation of separate classes with the total we get class percentages—a very useful type of statistics; by comparing circulation with books on shelves we get the average circulation of each book, etc. There is no end to the varieties of this class of statistics, and they may be rated all the way from "very valuable" to "useless" or even "nonsensical". The whole class would require a separate paper to discuss.

Let all these statistics tell the truth. Let them be clear. Tell exactly what they mean. Otherwise they will certainly mislead and are worse than useless. It is well to accompany every table with an explanatory note telling exactly how the data were obtained and whether they are of a high or a low degree of accuracy. In case you do not know, for instance, whether the word "juvenile" as generally used means the entire circulation among children, or the circulation in the children's room, or is merely short for "juvenile fiction," decide what it shall mean in your case and then state distinctly what it means. Read over other library reports critically and when you find any statistics that are vague, see to it that that particular kind of vagueness does not occur in your own tables.

And after it is all over, ask yourself, Now what shall I do with all this? In this paper only a few suggestions can be made. Take first, the financial data. If you find that your town is giving less per

capita or less per book circulated than the average, let it be your business to make it give more. There is a task that will fill up your spare moments. If you are paying for books more per book than other libraries, try to buy more cheaply. If your inventory shows a great loss of books by theft, try to reduce it next year by greater vigilance. If your circulation is decreasing ask the reason why. Get at it if you can and remedy it if possible. If your circulation shows a sudden increase in a particular class, investigate that and meet it, if proper, by increased purchases in that class. If a class that should circulate well has fallen, try to find out why. Is your collection in this class small and poor? Make it richer and larger. Has interest in the subject fallen off? Try to stimulate it.

In short, instead of regarding your work in connection with statistics as done when they have been collected, think that it has not yet begun. So far as your own work is concerned, let them serve only as an indication of the weak spots that must be strengthened and of the promising growths that must be encouraged. There are statistics and statistics. Some are dead; some are alive—vitalized and vitalizing. Not all of the library's work can be stated in figures. The largest part, the best part, you cannot put into statistical tables at all. Yet rightly used, your statistics may so guide and direct you along the lines of least resistance, even in this broader and finer work, that your energies may be put forth in it to the best effect—that you may aim right and that your shots may not go astray.

OLD PROBABILITIES IN THE LIBRARY—HIS MODEST VATICINATIONS*

"Don't never prophsey onles ye know," says Hosea Bigelow. I beg to call attention to the fact that this means "Don't prophesy at all"—perhaps it was so meant by the shrewd Hosea. We never can know—and yet we continue to prophesy. The best we can do, of course, is to estimate probabilities. Probabilities! That is a good word. They have dropped it from the weather reports and call their estimate a "forecast." I like the old word better. Let us see, then, what some of the probabilities are in library work.

"Everything flows," said the Greek philosopher. Nothing in the world is stable; change is the order of the day. But note the word he uses. That which flows is in a state of orderly change in a definite direction. Everything progresses; and the library and its work are being borne along in the general current. Now the writers on hydro-dynamics, who are experts on blow, tell us that there are two ways of studying a current, which they name the "historical" and the "statistical": In the former the attention is fixed on a definite particle of the moving fluid whose change of velocity and direction is noted as it passes along; in the latter a definite locality of the stream is selected and the fluid's changes of form and density at that particular place are observed. In like manner we may study the library movement historically or we can select a definite point in its course—the present time—and note the conditions and their

* Read before the Pennsylvania Library Club, Philadelphia, May 9, 1904.

alteration. The latter plan, I venture to think, is the more favorable one for the would-be prophet.

Let us, then, take a few of the salient features of library work as they exist to-day and inquire: (1) What is the present situation with regard to each; (2) Is that situation changing; and whither and how fast; (3) Is its rate of change altering, and (4) are the conditions that affect it and its alteration, likely to remain as they are. If we can answer all these questions we can at least make an attempt at estimating the probable situation at a given future time. We must bear in mind, however, that in the library world, as elsewhere, there are sudden or abrupt changes, or catastrophes, and that these generally defy prediction. And this is equally true of unexpected aids or beneficient influences. The library benefactions of Mr. Carnegie would have upset the most careful and logical estimate of library progress made twenty years ago.

First let us take up the status of our stock in trade—our supply of books. President Eliot warned us two years ago that our books are piling up too fast. His warning has met with scant heed because experience has not brought it home to most of us. Malthus warned us long ago that the progress of population was toward overcrowding the world. We laugh at him because there is still plenty of room and means of utilizing it unknown in his time. Yet population increases, and it will overcrowd the world some day unless something occurs to prevent. In like manner our stock of books increases faster and faster. The ordinary American public library is a thing of yesterday; small wonder that it does not yet begin to feel plethoric. Our oldest large libraries are those of our universities, and Harvard's president has told us that to them the evil day is

within sight. Librarians have not received with favor President Eliot's plea for getting us out of our future difficulty but this is neither here nor there. To judge by our present attitude either our library buildings must increase indefinitely in size or our stock must be weeded out. It must be remembered, however, that our books are perishable, and are growing more so. I do not regard this as an unmixed evil. Rather than to make our books unwieldy for the purpose of preserving them we prefer to make them usable and to rely on reprinting for their perpetuation. Thus what is not wanted will pass away. Perhaps this will solve our problem for us. But in any case it looks as if the future library building and its contents were to be greatly larger than those of to-day.

What are to be the style and arrangement of the future library building? The present situation can hardly be described in general terms. As in all building operations, there is a strife between the architect, representing aesthetics, and the administrator, representing utility. At present the architect seems to be having his way outside and the librarian his way inside. But why this contest? Is it not the architect's business to make utility more beautiful but not less useful? And should not the administrator wish his surroundings to please the eye? Apparently the two are drawing a little closer together of late. We are having fewer temples of art that have to be made over to fit them for use as libraries and fewer buildings that are workable but offensive to the eye. The tendency seems to be toward simple dignity, although we certainly have some surprising departures from it. Probably the library of the future will be a simple and massive structure of much greater size than at present, with its decorations

largely structural, and combining ample open-shelf and reading facilities with greatly increased capacity for book-storage.

There is one particular in which the architect has been specially out of touch with the administrator. The open-shelf is now all but universal, but many architects seem not to have heard of it. Many buildings, actually intended for administration on the free access system, seem yet to have been planned as closed-shelf libraries and opened to the public as an afterthought. A library without a special stack-room for book-storage is an unthinkable thing to most architects. And yet in many small libraries book-storage is not necessary, and in most branch libraries, where only books in general use are to be placed, it will never be necessary. To get the maximum advantage from open shelves, with a minimum of risk, the books should be placed on the walls as far as possible and such book-cases as stand on the floor should be as low as an ordinary table, so as to be easily overseen. A stack-room, it seems to me, is distinctly a closed-shelf arrangement. I believe this is coming to be recognized and that in the future library the books will be on or near the walls.

But how about the open-shelf system itself? At present there are few libraries that do not have it in some form, and some of these are libraries that continued strongly to disapprove of it even after it had become well and widely established. The indications are nearly all that it has come to stay. I say nearly all; for there is still a feeling among many people that it is not good administration to abandon so large a percentage of our books to thieves. In libraries in small communities where the loss is small, this question does not arise; but in New York, for instance, where we lost 5000 books last year, it is serious. We librarians may say and

believe that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages, but trustees and municipal authorities are hard to convince. In New York we have taken what many will consider a backward step, by partially closing, as an experiment, the shelves of two of our branches. So that although we may safely say that free access has come to stay, I do not look to see it applied very generally to large collections. One thing seems to me clear. Library administration is becoming increasingly business-like, and it is not business-like to accept a large annual loss without an attempt to minimize it. We must at least investigate regularly and rigidly the sources and character of this loss.

As for the other features that we have become accustomed to regard as distinguishing the new library era from the old—special work with children, cooperation with schools, travelling libraries, etc.—it is evident that these, too, have come to stay. Their spheres are widening and their aims are diversifying, however, so that he who should venture to predict their precise status in the future would be rash.

In fact, the library idea itself is beginning to suffer a sort of restless change that is quite distinct from its orderly progress. The activities of the library are at present a good deal like those of the amoeba—stretching out a tentacle here, withdrawing one there; improvising a mouth and then turning it into a stomach; shifting and stretching about; somewhat vague and formless, yet instinct with life, appetite and caution, and vitalized with at least the germ and promise of intelligence. Such a state is an unpromising one for prophecy. Is this or that new development of activity the beginning of an orderly march in a straight line, or is it to be withdrawn or reversed to-morrow? Is our work with children to include much that now seems to belong

to the kindergarten, the museum, and the art gallery? Are our travelling library departments to sell books in the future as well as lend them? Are we to deliver books free at our user's homes? Are our Boards of Education to turn over to us the superintendence of all such work as deals with books and their use? Many questions like these would have been answered in the affirmative yesterday but in the negative to-day. I might be inclined to say "yes" to some of them now, when to-morrow would prove them out of the question. But there is one assertion that we can make boldly. Whatever the library has tried to do or to be, whether success or failure has attended it, it has never ceased to be a library—a keeper and purveyor of books. Whatever else it may undertake, we may be sure that this will continue to be its chief reason for existence, and that its other activities, if such there be, will grow out of this and group themselves around it. Is the library to grow into a bookstore? I do not know, but if so its commercial functions are likely to be subsidiary. Certain libraries have already added to their duties as free institutions the functions of pay-libraries, and the commercial feature has thus been introduced. It seems to be spreading, and it may prove an entering wedge for a system of actual sales to supplement that of paid loans. A powerful deterrent, however, will be the influence of the book-trade. Following the line of least resistance, the activity of the library as an aid to the ownership as well as the reading of books is perhaps more likely to manifest itself in advice than in actual trade. Some libraries are now making special effort to give their readers information about book-prices, and about places and methods of purchase; and it seems likely that this kind of aid, since it can arouse no opposition, will increase.

The position in which we find ourselves, of opposition to those who make and sell books, is unfortunate. The situation has been growing more and more tense and it may continue so to grow, perhaps up to the point where all discount will be withheld from libraries and where new legislation may discourage importation, but I do not believe that it will keep on indefinitely. No one who looks into the matter closely can help believing that in the long run libraries advertise the book-trade and help it by promoting general interest in literature. This view of the matter was taken by a majority of the New York Booksellers' League at a recent dinner at which the question was discussed. Even purely as a matter of business, the library deserves special privileges and it will doubtless continue in some measure to receive them.

It does not, however, seem probable that the average cost of books to a public library will ever be as low again as it was, say, ten years ago. In fact this may be said of all library expenses. Salaries are rising and ought to rise higher; our buildings are larger and finer and demand more expensive care. We are heating them with more costly apparatus and lighting them with electricity. The library of the future will doubtless cost more to maintain in every item than the library of the past—but the public will receive more than the difference.

As regards children's work there seem to be at present two tendencies—one toward complete isolation and one in the opposite direction. Will our grandchildren, when they go to the public library, be segregated in a separate room, perhaps in a separate building; or will they be treated as a distinct class only so far as may be absolutely necessary for good administration? Probably complete separation is best for the library and best for the adults; I hesi-

tate to say that it is best for the children. After all, childhood is but a stage and not a resting state at that—rather restless and progressive. Any special conditions that we provide for it must themselves be subject to constant change. In our schools the child passes from grade to grade. In our libraries the grades are only two; let us not make the leap from one to the other too great. I look to see special library work for children increase in importance, but with due recognition of the fact that some of the needs and aspirations of a "grown-up" are present in many a twelve-year-old and that it is better that the clothes of a growing child should be a size too large than an exact fit.

The travelling library deserves a special word, because its success is indicative of the tendency to bring the book and its user into closer contact. In New York we began, only seven years ago, to circulate a few hundred books monthly in this way among half a dozen schools. Now we give out nearly half a million a year from nearly 500 different points. We hear the same tale from all sides. And the cost of circulation per book is surprisingly small. In New York the circulation through travelling libraries is equal to that of three branches of the first class, while the number of assistants employed is about half the number required in one of those branches. The cost of operating three large branches in Carnegie buildings is about $40,000 yearly, whereas our travelling libraries for the last fiscal year cost us but $6400. Of course it must be remembered that a very large amount of the work of circulation in this case is done by volunteer assistants and that the users of the books have not the facilities and resources of a branch library—the number and variety of books, the pleasant surroundings, the trained aid. Of course the travelling library can never take

the place of the fully equipped branch, but in supplementing branch work and in reaching those who live in sparsely settled communities its capabilities are great and it may be expected that its use will increase.

The broadening of library work illustrated by the successive appearance of the reference library, the circulating library, the delivery station, the branch and the travelling library suggests the thought that this series may be carried further in the future by the addition of some working plan that will bring the book still closer to its user. Such a plan would be the system in which books are delivered free of charge at the houses of those who use them, or the provision of a real library on wheels—a van supplied with shelving for a thousand books or more from which selection can be made as it moves about from house to house. It does not seem probable that any such device as this will be generally adopted for districts adequately provided with regular libraries, but for thinly settled regions they may supplement or take the place of our present travelling or home libraries. I believe for instance, that a moving library of 1000 books, calling once a week at each house in a farming district would be preferable to four travelling libraries of 250 books each, stationed at points in the same district, although, of course, the cost would be correspondingly greater.

The library's status as an educational institution seems now to be well established. No one disputes it, and as this appears to be the chief ground on which its support by public funds is justified we may regard it as settled that the library is to continue to play its part in public instruction. This part, though not so definite and positive as that of the school, extends over a far longer period. While

the library's work is parallel and supplementary to that of the school in the case of those of school age, it must continue its work alone after its users have left school. Here it may settle its methods for itself, but in its earlier work when it deals with pupils, it has the teacher to reckon with. The necessity for constant consultation and co-operation between the authorities of two public institutions, whose work is so similar and can so easily result in wasteful duplication or still more wasteful conflict, is obvious. We need not be surprised that librairans and teachers are getting nearer together and we may confidently predict that the *rapprochement* will be closer in the future. But although the school is ceasing to look upon its younger sister as an interloper in the pedagogical family, there is still plenty of room for the definition of their respective spheres. And we have no right to complain that the school is still doing much library work, when we have ourselves sometimes tried to do school work. I look in the future for the definition of two clearly separated spheres of activity, one filled by the library and the other by the school, and for the closest co-operation between the two that is consistent with confining each to its own work. It is probably too much to expect that the school will give up the custodianship of books. It must at least control its own text books, and its collection of reference works should be complete enough to constitute a thorough guide and aid to proper study. But the distribution of supplementary reading should be the part of the public library. This and other related points are to be settled, if at all, in the future by two kinds of mutual understandings; namely, between the governing boards of library and school and between librarian and teacher. The due definition of spheres of work can come only from an official agreement between

library board and school board; helpful aid on both sides can come only from an official agreement between library board and school board; helpful aid on both sides can come only from personal contact and acquaintance between teachers and library assistants—such a degree of acquaintance between teachers and library assistants—such a degree of acquaintance that each comes to have a practical knowledge of the other's problems, trials and limitations. Most librarians have made more or less effort in this direction; some have met with distinguished success. We may safely predict further progress along this line.

The lessons of the past and of the present all point to the increasing use of the library as a great engine of popular education, using the noun in its broadest sense and emphasizing the adjective. The library is more and more a great humanizing influence; if this is so, nothing human must be alien to it. And much that is human and humanizing is nevertheless ephemeral. With some the implications of this word are wholly contemptuous. Of a day! Does nothing valuable pass quickly away, having done its little work? The day itself is a day only and vanishes with the evening and the morning; yet it has its part in the record of the years. So with "ephemeral" literature. As we have seen, a great deal of what we are wont to consider as standard and permanent will ultimately perish. Yet be its life that of a year or a century, a book may play its little part in the mental development of those who read it. Just at present the favorite vehicle of literary expression is fiction. People put into stories what they have to say of history, sociology and ethics; they embody in romance their theories of aesthetics, economics and politics. There is good doctrine with a poor literary setting and there are

paste jewels in pure gold. But taking it by and large the much decried deluge of modern fiction has undoubtedly been educative in its tendency. This is why I cannot yield to logic and predict the gradual disappearance of all but a small residuum of fiction from the public library. There is a tendency in that direction but there are some signs of a reaction. The seer may hope, even if he dare not predict, that the great public library that can afford to do so will continue to purchase such fiction as will interest or entertain the average person of education, even if it is to stay on the shelves but a few months.

What will be the future distribution of libraries in this country? At present their numbers are large in the northern states and comparatively small in the southern. Growth has been unexampled in its rapidity and has been stimulated by large benefactions. So far as this growth may be looked upon as the direct result of Mr. Carnegie's gifts it may doubtless be regarded as abnormal, although it should be noted that every Carnegie building means a present and future outlay on the part of the community in which it stands, of many times the amount given by the donor. Primarily, library expansion is the result of a popular conviction that the public library is a public necessity. Expansion has proceeded in proportion to the spread of that conviction and along the lines of its progress. If there are fewer public libraries in the South than in the North it is because the need for them is not felt there, even if it exists. Doubtless the race problem is a powerful inhibitory influence. Two things are certain; that library expansion is to go on for some time, and that a time will come when it must stop. When that time arrives, the library will have attained its majority and we shall have an opportunity

to address ourselves to problems that can not be attended to during our period of growth.

Who will use our great library of the future? Who uses the library of to-day? I have been asked that question by reporters and have been puzzled to answer it. For whose use is the public library intended? It will be logical to answer "the Public, of course," but there are a great many poeple who will give this answer with mental reservations. With them "the Public" means some particular part of the public. Some think that the libraries are for the poor, or at any rate for those who cannot afford to buy books for themselves. This is a survival of the origin of some of our circulating libraries, which were originally charities. But a public foundation and a charitable foundation are two different things. Our parks are free, yet we do not object to their free use by the wealthy, nor do the wealthy classes themselves seem to shrink from it. Some again would limit the use of a library to students, or at all events to those who do not care to withdraw books for home use. These are people who do not believe in the circulating library—and there are still such. Others again would have the public library cater only to those of educated literary taste. For these reasons and for others it is a fact that our public libraries, even those with the largest circulations, are not used by the entire public. Probably, however, they are being used more and more freely. In a library that uses the two-book system it is impossible to tell exactly from statistics, how many persons are drawing from the library at one time. Assuming, however, that the number is proportional to the number of books outstanding, we find in the New York Public Library that it has been increasing a little faster of late years than the circulation. In other

words, individual reading has not increased, and the great recent increase of circulation in our library and presumably in others also, is due to an increase of readers. The size of the library's public is therefore increasing and there is no reason to suppose that it will not continue to do so. Of course there must be a limit. For instance, certain sections of the public will not use a library—as they will not use a school—in conjunction with other sections. This may be because of social or racial feeling, or personal uncleanliness or offensiveness, even when the latter is not carried to the point where the librarian can properly object to it. In such cases the lower element will drive out the higher. The remedy seems to be sought in segregation. This may be either open and acknowledged as in those southern cities where the library has a separate department for colored people, or it may be virtual, as where a convenient lounging room with newspapers is provided for the tramp element, sometimes with the privilege of smoking. In large cities the branch library system acts in the same way. The character of the card-holders is determined by that of the surrounding district and we thus get practically separate libraries for separate sections of the community. I look to see this separation proceed to a somewhat greater degree, not perhaps systematically but automatically and almost involuntarily. In spite of the apparent concession to class feeling, it will certainly increase the aggregate use of the library and thus make it more truly a public institution. So far as the branch system is concerned, of course, this is only one of the ways in which it increases the size of the library's public. Even in a section where the population is perfectly homogeneous, more people will always be served by two libraries than by one. The number of branch library systems is rapidly in-

creasing and the prospects are that the greatest possible use is to be made of them in the future. And they will be made up of true branches. Delivery stations have their uses, but they can never take the place of buildings with permanent stocks of books and all the conveniences of a separate library. Where a branch building is also a delivery station, as it always should be, that is, where the users of a branch are allowed to draw on the stock of the Central Library or of the other branches, it is found that the branch use vastly exceeds the station use. In our own library a branch that circulates 500 to 1000 of its own books daily will give out only two or three from other branches. This is sufficiently indicative of the preferences of the public, and in a matter of this kind public preference will ultimately govern. These branch libraries will have limited stocks of books, mostly, though not entirely, on open shelves, and will include small reference collections which will be more important as the branch is farther removed from the central library. These predictions, it seems to me, are all warranted by present tendencies.

How will the future library be governed and administered? The governing body at present is almost universally a board of trustees who are men of standing and responsibility but usually without expert knowledge. These are sometimes semi-independent and sometimes under the direct control of their municipal government. The present tendency seems to be to minimize municipal control but to increase the number of governing bodies subject to it. In other words private libraries are doing more public work than formerly under contract with municipalities, becoming thereby subject to the control of the city or town but not so closely as to bring politics into the management. This state of things is

so desirable that we may expect it to be multiplied in the future. As regards the lay or inexpert character of the governing board, though it is looked upon by some as objectionable, it is shared by the library with great numbers of other public and semi-public institutions. Such a board may be regarded as representative of the great lay public, on whose behalf the institution must be operated, and whose members are interested in results rather than in the special methods by which these results may be obtained. That the members of such a board should be mere figure-heads is certainly not to be desired; that they should, either as individuals or collectively, take part in the details of administration is equally undesirable. There are boards that are doing the one or the other of these things, but the tendency is to lean neither in the direction of laxity nor of undue interference—to require definite results and to hold the librarian strictly responsible for the attainment of those results, leaving him to employ his own methods.

And the librarian of the future; who and what will he be? The difference between the modern librarian and him of the old school has often been the subject of comment. The librarian nowadays is less the scholar and more the man of affairs. Is change to go on in this direction? There are rather, it seems to me, signs of a reaction. Perhaps reaction is hardly the word. The librarian, while keeping in touch with the times, is reaching back for a little of the spirit of the old-time custodian and incorporating it with his own. Is it too much to hope that the heads of our future libraries, will keep in the forefront of library progress, alert to appreciate the popular need and to respond to it, may yet have something of the sweet and gentle spirit of the old scholars who used to preside over our storehouses of books?

Who are to be the assistants in our library of the future? At present our staffs are recruited from the following sources:

(1) The library schools. The best of these have supplied chiefly the heads of the smaller libraries, and heads of departments or assistants of the higher grades in the larger libraries. Few heads of the large libraries are school-graduates and few lower-grade assistants. There are, however, schools of the second class whose graduates have gone into the lower grades both in small and large institutions.

(2) Apprentice classes, generally formed to instruct untrained persons in the work of a particular library, so that those who enter its lower grades may be at least partially fitted for their work. The best of these rise by promotion to the upper grades.

(3) Appointment of totally untrained persons. If such persons are thoroughly well educated they may enter the work in the higher grades or even as the heads of libraries. If not they generally enter at the bottom, although of course some obtain higher positions through political or local influence.

This, I believe, states the situation fairly. What are the tendencies? There can be no doubt that the library school is growing in favor. The increasing numbers of those who apply for school courses, the raising of requirements, both for entrance and for graduation, the second class schools that have sprung up in limitation of those of higher grade, making necessary the appointment of committees by various library bodies to examine and report on them—all point in this direction. At the same time we have had numerous instances, of late, of the selection of non-graduates to fill high library positions and at least one instance of frank statement on the part of a librarian of acknowledged eminence, in favor of taking college men of ability into the libra-

ry immediately on graduation, instead of putting them through a library school. The library schools aim, and very properly so, at occupying the same position toward the library profession that the medical and law schools do toward the medical and legal professions. Statistics show that they have not yet reached that position. Still, it is probable that they will continue to approximate to it as a limit. In the future, more and more of the higher library positions will doubtless be filled by library-school graduates—and so also will more of the lower positions. When the demand for assistants in the higher grades begins to slacken, proportionately to the supply, as it is sure to do some day, the library school graduates will be willing to enter the library force in the lower grade, and will thus crowd out the untrained or partially trained applicants to some extent. They may even make the apprentice class a superfluity, in which case I am sure librarians will abandon it without a sigh.

In these somewhat desultory forecasts the object of the prophet has been not so much to impress upon others his own beliefs as to stimulate a taste for prophecy—a desire to glance over the rail and see which way the current is setting. Without being fatalists, we may hold that there are certain great tendencies in human affairs, vast social currents, against which it is well-nigh hopeless to struggle. Those who desire to accomplish results must work with these currents, not against them. Success has almost always been won in this way. Even when a few bold spirits have seemed to stem and turn back the whole tide, it will generally be found that an unseen undercurrent was in their favor. Learn therefore to judge of the currents; so shall we avoid the rocks and shoals and bring our craft safely to port.

THE LOVE OF BOOKS AS A BASIS FOR LIBRARIANSHIP*

Is the love of books a proper or necessary qualification for one who is to care for books and to see that they do the work for which they were made? First, let us ask a question or two. What is the love of books; and what is there in books that one may love? The same question might be asked and answered of the love of human beings; for between it and the love of books there are curious analogies. Of what, then, do man and book severally consist as objects of interest and affection?

First of all there is the man himself, the ego, the soul—which cannot indeed exist on this earth without its material embodiment, but which most of us realize is in some way distinct from that embodiment. So the book has its soul. The ideas or facts that it sets forth, though dependent for their influence on the printed page, exist independently of that page and make the book what it is. Next we have the material embodiment; that without which the man or the book could not exist for us; which is a necessary part of him or it, but necessary only because it is the vehicle through which man or book may be known by the senses. The body of the book is thus so much, and only so much, of its material part, its paper and its ink, as is necessary to present the contents properly to the eye. Lastly, we have the clothing of man and of book, having the function of protection or of decoration, or both; in the case of the

* Read before the New York State Library Association, Twilight Park, September, 1906.

book the protective cover, often highly decorated, and so much of interior elaboration as cannot be said to be strictly necessary to the presentation of the idea. The "body" and the clothing of the book, let it be noted, are not strictly separable as are those of the man. The line between them may be drawn in different places by different people. The same illustration, we will say, may be considered by one reader an absolutely necessary part of the book—an organ of its body—while to another it is but an ornamental embellishment—a decorative gewgaw. In spite of this vagueness, however, there is here an undeniable distinction between those material parts of the book that are necessary to its existence and those that merely embellish it or protect it.

The book therefore, like the man, is made up of soul, body and clothes. Which of these is the entity that may be loved? Now there are many kinds of lovers and many kinds of love. The belle of the ball may be surrounded with admirers, but if clad in rags and seated in a gutter she might excite no favorable notice. Still more may a pretty face be loved when it has no mental or spiritual qualities behind it. Yet these types of affection are inferior—no one would deny it. In like manner those who love the book merely for its fine clothes, who rejoice in luxurious binding and artistic illumination, and even those who dwell chiefly on its fine paper and careful typography, are but inferior lovers of books. The one loves his book for its clothes, and the other for its bodily perfection; neither cares primarily for its contents, its soul.

Now the true lover is he who loves the soul—who sees beyond clothes and bodily attributes, and cherishes nobility of character, strength of intellect, loftiness of purpose, sweetness of disposition, stead-

fastness of attachment—those thousand qualities that go to make up personality. All these the book has, like the man or the woman—for is it not the essence of its writer? Your true book-lover would rather have a little old dog's-eared copy of his favorite author, soiled and torn by use, with binding gone, and printed on bad paper with poorer type and worse ink, than a mediocre production that is a typographic and artistic masterpiece.

And yet we call the collector of fine bindings and rare editions a "book-lover," to the exclusion of the one who loves truly and devotedly. The true book-lover wants to get at the soul of his book; the false one may never see it. He may even refrain from cutting the leaves of the rare first edition that he has just bought, in doing which he is like the ignorant mother who sews her child up in his clothes for the winter—nay, worse; for you cannot sew up the child's soul.

Now let there be no misunderstanding. As the true lover would have his mistress beautiful—nay, as she *is* beautiful to his eyes, whatever she may be to others, and as he would, if he could, clothe her in silks and adorn her with gems, so the true book-lover need not be and is not adverse to having his favorite author sumptuously set forth; he would rather than not see his books properly and strongly printed and bound; his love for the soul need not interfere with proper regard for the body and its raiment. And here is where the love of the book has an advantage over the affection whose object is a person. In spite of the advertisements of the beauty doctors, a homely face can rarely be made beautiful; but the book may be embodied and clothed as we will; it is the same, however printed and bound, to him who loves it for its contents.

Thus it will be seen that when I speak in general of "a love of books" I mean not a love of their typography, their illustration, or their bindings, but of their contents; a love of the universal mind of humanity as enshrined in print; a love of the method of recording ideas in written speech, as contrasted with their presentation in the spoken tongue—a love of ideas and ideals as so recorded. Such a love of books is pre-eminently a characteristic of civilized man. It is not synonymous with a love of knowledge—the savage who never saw a book may have that; it is not even the same as a love of *recorded* knowledge, for knowledge may be recorded in other ways—in the brain by oral repetition, in sculptured memorials, in mere piles of stone. It is a love of the ideas of men recorded in a particular way, in *the* particular way that has commended itself to civilized man as best.

The very existence of a library presupposes such a love of books. No one who had not an affection for the printed records of his race would care to possess them, much less to collect and preserve them. It would seem, then, that a love of books should be not only a qualification but an absolute prerequisite for entrance upon librarianship. By inquiring how and why it has come to be regarded as a non-essential or as of secondary importance, we may perhaps learn something.

A young woman comes to me to ask for library work; and when I demand sternly, "Have you training or experience?" she timidly answers, "No; but I'm very fond of books." I smile; you all smile in like case. Why do we smile? What business have we to underrate such a fundamental qualification and exalt above it mere technicalities? The ability to acquire these technicalities exists in ten persons

where the ability to love books as they should be loved is found in one. If the love so avowed is real, even if it is only potential, not actual, our feeling in its presence should be one of reverence, not amusement. It should prove the candidate fit, perhaps not for immediate appointment, but for preliminary training with a view to appointment in the future.

If it is real! Candor compels me to confess that, like some other avowals of love, that of a love for books does not always ring true. "What have you read?" I once asked one of these self-styled book-lovers. She fixed me with her eye and after a moment's impressive pause she replied "Deep thought!" I mentally marked her as a false lover. Proud parents relate how their progeny in childhood would rather peruse E. S. Ellis than play and pore over Alger than eat—this as irrefragable proof of fitness for a library career. Consideration of cases like these makes us wonder whether the smile is so much out of the way after all. Does the true book-lover publicly announce her affection in the hope of gain? Does she not rather, like Shakespeare's maid, "never tell her love?" It is to be feared that some of these people are confusing a love of books with a love of reading. They are not the same thing. Some persons enjoy the gentle mental exercise of letting a stream of more or less harmless ideas flow through their brains—continuously in and continuously out again—apprehending them one after another in lazy fashion, and then dismissing them. The result is a degree of mental friction, but no permanent intellectual acquisition. How much of our own reading is of this kind I shudder to contemplate. Far be it from me to condemn it; it has its uses; it is an excellent cure for wakefulness after a busy day; but it no more indicates or stimulates a love for books

than shaking hands with a thousand callers makes it possible for the Governor or the President to claim them all as intimate friends.

A real love for books, after all, is betrayed rather than announced; it shows itself in the chance remark, the careless action, just as another kind of love may show itself in a glance or a word.

I believe this to be the reason why a love for books is so little considered among the modern qualifications of librarianship; it appears in acts, not in words; it cannot be ascertained by asking questions. He who protests that he has it must needs be an object of suspicion. And yet I venture to say that if any librarian has made a conspicuous success of his work, apart from the mere mechanics of it, he has achieved that success primarily and notably through love of books. This I assert to be the case down to the assistant of lowest grade.

To be good, work must be ungrudging. And though other things than love for one's task may make one willing to do it and able to do it well, intelligent interest is always a prime factor in securing the best results.

And love of one's work becomes a very simple matter when there is love of the subject matter of that work. Those who lament that they are doomed to drudgery should remember that drudgery is subjective. All work consists of a series of acts which taken apart from their relationships are unimportant and uninteresting, but which acquire importance and interest from those relationships. It is so also with sports. Think how childish are the mere acts of striking a ball with a racket or of kicking an inflated leather sphere over a cross-bar! Yet in their proper sequence with other acts they may be the object of the breathless interest or enthusiasm of thousands

of spectators. And if this may be the case with a mere game, how much more so with an occupation that is part of the world's life! To dip a brush in color and draw it across a canvas is a simple act, yet such acts in their sequence may produce a work of art. Here the workman understands the position and value of each act in the sequence; hence he is not apt to feel it as drudgery. Drudgery is work in which the elementary acts are performed unintelligently, with little or no appreciation of their position in the scheme of things, as when a day laborer toils at digging a hole in the ground without the slightest knowledge of its purpose, not caring, indeed, whether it is to be a post-hole or a grave. But to the man who is searching for buried treasure the digging ceases to be drudgery; he knows what he is about, and every shovelful as it is lifted brings him nearer to possible gold and gems. To change drudgery into interested labor, therefore, realize what you are doing; know its relation to what has gone before and what is to come; understand what it is you are working on and what you are working for. Learn to love that something; and all that you can do to shape it, to increase its usefulness and to bring it into new relationships will have a vivid interest to you.

What could be duller than the act of writing in a book, hour after hour, certain particulars regarding other books, the author's name, the title, the publisher, the size, the price? But if you love those volumes, individually or generically, and if you realize that what you are doing is a necessary step in the work of making their contents accessible and useful —of leading others to love them as you have learned to do—then and only then, it seems to me, does such a task as accessioning become full of interest. And so it is with every one of the thousand acts that

make up the daily work of a library assistant. I am saying nothing new; you know and we all know that the laborer who does his work well is he who does it *con amore*. The wage-earner may labor primarily to support himself and his family, but he will never really *earn* his living unless his work is of a kind that can command his whole-hearted interest—unless he likes it and takes pride in doing it well. This is why the love of books—an intelligent interest in literature and in the world's written records—is so fundamental a necessity for a librarian.

It should be emphasized that one may love books even if some of the great masterpieces leave him cold, just as one may love humanity though Alexander and Cæsar, we will say, do not happen to stir his enthusiasm. One may even, in a way, love books when that love is expended on what is by nature ephemeral, so long as it is lovable and excellent. Perishability and excellence are not contraries by any means. Indeed, I heard a painter once, indignant because his art had been characterized as less permanent than sculpture, with implied derogation, assert that all beauty is of its nature perishable. If this be so, a thing of beauty, instead of being a joy forever, is a passing pleasure and the more evanescent as it nears perfection. This thesis could hardly be successfully maintained, and yet I conceive that it has in it an element of truth. There are critics who refuse to admire anything in art that has not in it the elements of permanency. A sunset they will acknowledge to be beautiful, though fleeting, but its artistic portrayal, they say, must be lasting. An idea, a passion, may be fine, even when forgotten in a moment, but if enshrined in literary form it must be worth preserving forever or they regard it as without value. These people are confusing mere durability with

beauty. "Is anything that doesn't last three years a book?" asks Mr. Carnegie. We might as well refuse to admire a flower because it fades over night, or turn from our daily food because it is incapable of retaining indefinitely its savor and nutritious qualities. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that a thing may possess beauty and usefulness in a high degree to-day and lose them both to-morrow. That is an excellent reason for discarding it then, but not for spurning it now. What is cast into the oven of oblivion to-morrow may to-day be arrayed, beyond all the glories of Solomon, in aptness of allusion and in fitness of application.

Much of the best that appears in the daily press is of this kind. Along with a good deal that is worthy of long life, there is a host of admirable material in the ephemeral paragraphs that we are accustomed to despise. We may despise them, but still we read; and nothing that is read with interested attention by fifty millions of people is really despicable. The average newspaper writer may well be content to toss off paragraphs for us; he need not care who constructs our leading editorials. The influence of the paragraph is incomparably the greater; it has the raciness of the soil, shrewd wit driven home with our native exaggeration and the sting of the epigram. And much of that which is bound between covers has this peculiar aroma of journalism—its fitness to-day, its staleness to-morrow. This sort of thing may be badly done or it may be well done—inconceivably apt, dainty and well-flavored. If it is of the best, why may we not love it, though it be to-morrow as flat as the sparkling wine without its gaseous brilliancy?

To those who have been accustomed to books from childhood, who have lived with them and among

them, who constantly read them and read about them, they seem to be a part of the natural order of things. It is something of a shock then when we awake, as we all must occasionally, to the realization that to a very large proportion of our population, supposedly educated, they are a thing apart—pedantic, useless, silly; to be borne with during a few years of schooling and then cast aside; to be studied perfunctorily but never to be read. When the statistics of reading are analyzed I believe we shall be startled, not by the great increase in it, notable and indubitable as this is, but at the enormous amount of progress that still remains to be made before the use of books by our people indicates any real general interest in them and appreciation of them. An attitude toward books that is very general is indicated by a series of cartoons which has now been running for several years in a New York evening paper—a proof that its subject must strike a responsive chord, for the execution of the pictures is beneath contempt. It is entitled "Book-Taught Bilkins," and it sets forth how on one occasion after another Bilkins relies on the information that he finds in a book—and meets with a disaster. This is a trifle, but it is one of those straws that tell which way the wind blows. A presumably intelligent man, a graduate of the public schools, occupying a position under the city, recently remarked to one of our library people that he spent his holidays usually at one of the nearby recreation parks. "Why don't you go sometimes to one of the branches of the public library?" he was asked. He laughed and said, "I've never read a book yet, and I don't think I'll start now." How many are there like him? We are educating them by thousands. They leave school with no interest in books, without the slightest appreciation of what books

mean—certainly with no love for them. To these people books are but the vehicles and symbols of a hateful servitude. Perhaps this is inevitable; if it is, all that we can say is that far from "continuing the work of the schools," as we are often told is our function, we may often have to undo a part of it, which consists in creating an attitude of hostility toward books and reading. Can this be done by those who do not appreciate and care for literature?

I do not want to be considered pessimistic. This lack of interest in books I believe to be noticeable largely because we have changed our whole attitude toward the relationship of literature to the people. Love for books used to be regarded as properly confined to a class; that the bulk of people did not care for literature was no more significant than the fact that they had never tasted *paté de foie gras*. Now we consider that every one ought to love books—and the fact that vast numbers of people do not, no longer seems natural to us. That these people are beginning to show an interest, and that the ranks of the indifferent are growing slowly less, I firmly believe; and it is my opinion that the public library is no inconsiderable factor in the change. Some, it is true, are beginning to care for books by caring for poor and trashy books. These, however, are on the right road; they are on their way up; it is our business not to despise them, but to help them up further. Can we do it without having ourselves a proper appreciation of what is good in books?

But can a love for books be taught? To those who have the aptitude for it, it certainly can. In other cases it cannot. To those who have it in them, however, appreciation for the beautiful may certainly be awakened by precept and example. I have in mind a farmer in the Virginia mountains, dwelling

in a lovely region, but among a rural population without the slightest appreciation of the beauties of nature. This particular man had worked for years in and about a summer camp and had thus associated with people from the city whose appreciation of the fine prospects from cliff and summit was unusually keen. In time he actually came to feel such appreciation himself, and he would spend the whole of his rare holidays on a rocky peak 4000 feet above the sea, drinking in the beauties of the scene and eagerly pointing them out to his tousle-headed children, all of whom he took with him. None of that brood will cease to love nature, I am sure, and their lives will be sweeter and better for it. In like fashion, association with people who appreciate good books will awaken a similar love in many an unpromising mind. Mere contact with the books themselves may do it, and so our open shelves have brought it to thousands, but the additional influence of a sympathetic human mind will hasten it wonderfully. The busy assistant at the desk may have a chance to say but a single word. Shall that word relate to the mechanics of librarianship—the charging system, the application form, the shelf-arrangement—or shall it convey in some indefinable way the fact that here is a body of workers, personally interested in books and eager to arouse or foster such an interest in others?

But how may one tell whether the true love of books is in him? To detect it in another, as already noted, requires more than a brief acquaintance. But to test oneself is easier. What would the world be to you without books? Could you go on living your life, physically and mentally, even as you do now, if the whole great series, from big to little, from old to new, from the Bible and Shakespeare down to the latest novel, were utterly wiped away? If you can

truthfully say that such a cataclysm would make no difference to you, then you certainly do not love books. If the loss of them, or of some part of them—even the least—would leave a void in your life, then you have that love in greater or less degree, in finer or coarser quality. Let us pity those who have it not. And as for you who have it, you surely have not only a fundamental qualification for librarianship, but that which will make, and does make, of you better men and women. Let us perfect ourselves in all the minutiæ of our profession, let us study how to elevate it and make it more effective, but let us not forget the book, without which it would have no existence. Possibly the librarian who reads is lost, but the librarian who has never read, or who, having read, has imbibed from reading no feeling toward books but those of dislike or indifference, is surely worse than lost—he has, so far as true librarianship goes, never existed.

THE LIBRARY AS THE EDUCATIONAL CENTER OF A TOWN

In using this expression it is not intended to imply that the library is, or should be, the only place in a town where educational processes are going on—perhaps not even the principal place. The center of a circle is not the whole circle; its area is zero, it is simply a point so related to other parts of the figure as to give it supreme importance. The center of a wheel, through which the axle passes, is not the whole wheel, but around it the whole wheel turns. So the educational functions of a town library, while they may not bulk large in a catalog, should be so related to those of other institutions in the community as to give it peculiar importance and authority.

It is not necessary here to remark that education is what its name implies—a drawing out, a development of potentialities. Because it is this, and only this, it will never make a Shakespeare or a Newton out of one who has it not "in him," as the idiom so well runs, to become one or the other. Because it is this, there are men who do have in them potentialities of usefulness, perhaps even of greatness, but who for lack of it, die undeveloped; "mute" and "inglorious."

From the moment when the new-born babe feels the contact of the outer world, through his organs of sense, that contact begins to develop his possibilities. Here education begins, and it ceases only with the stoppage of all functions at death. When it has gone on so far that a contact is established with other

human minds, this development takes a special turn that differentiates it from any training that the lower animals receive—that makes it a link in the education of the race. Still further is this accentuated when the child begins to have access to the printed records of the race in the shape of books.

Books, or no books, his educational development goes on, at home, among his playmates, in his chosen work in shop, farm or office, but the use of books gives it a wider relationship—a broader outlook. This relation of our formal intellectual records to education which is emphasized especially during the period of attendance at school or college, makes a storehouse of books of peculiar value and importance to a community. Especially should the existence of such a collection direct the attention of every person in the community to the fact that the use of books to develop the mind and broaden the possibilities does not properly end with the close of the school life. It is the misfortune of the school, in too many instances, that its work engenders a hatred of books instead of a love for them. Play, we are told, is "work that you don't have to do." It is the merit of the library that there is no compulsion about its use. We dislike what is forced upon us, but the study which is the hardest of work in a school may become recreation when one is free to follow the line of inclination among the books of a well-made collection. In this way the post-scholastic education, if we may call it so, which lasts as long as the life, is kept in touch with the written records, instead of casting those records aside and proceeding haphazard wholly on so-called "practical" lines. The teachers express this, when they admit the public library at all into the educational pantheon, by saying that it may "continue the work of the school." This is a one-sided way

of looking at the matter—as one-sided as it would be to say that the function of the school is to prepare people for the use of the public library—a statement no less and no more true than the other. The proper way to put it is that the school and the library have closely related educational functions, both employing largely the written records of previous attainment, but the school concentrating its influence on a short period of peculiar susceptibility, with the aid of enforced personal discipline and exposition, while the library works without such opportunities, but also freed from these limitations. Thus the library uses books as a means of development, not with the aid of personal influence, but without taskmasters; not without discipline, but without compulsion. During the years of school attendance, it works with the school, and it recognizes the fact that its use is a habit best acquired early. This is the reason for our separate rooms for children, with their special collections and trained assistants, and also for our efforts to co-ordinate the child's reading with his school work. We are not trying to set up a rival educational system, which by its superior attractiveness may divert the attention of the child from school; we are merely seeing that our young people may become accustomed to use books properly, to love them dearly and to look upon the place where they are housed as in some sense an intellectual refuge through life.

This closeness of contact with a public collection of books is largely a modern idea. In ancient times the safeguarding and preservation of the individual book was far more important than it is today. Greater public security, and especially the improvement in methods of duplication, have now made such care unnecessary, except in the case of volumes kept as curiosities, or for occasional use. The book that

does the most for popular education is not kept behind bars, but sent out broadcast for free use, shortly perishing in the flesh to be reincarnated in fresh paper, type and binding. Sending out books for home use has added enormously to the educational value of the library and to the good done by books—to the number of points of contact of mind with mind. Along the same line has been the development of subsidiary centers of distribution—branch libraries, traveling libraries, delivery stations. All these have added to the tendency to look upon the public library as a center of municipal education. In many communities it is being looked to now as such a center in matters having no direct connection with books. It is a museum on a small scale; a lecture bureau; the maker, sometimes the publisher, of lists and bibliographies. In old times the local collector of minerals or of prints turned over his crystals or his pictures to the school; now, as likely as not, he gives them to the library. It is better that he should; for in the educational life of the individual, the school comes and goes, but the library goes on forever.

It is this capacity of the modern library to reach out beyond its own walls in many different directions that makes it proper for us to speak of it as a center. In a similar way the physicist speaks of centers of force. And as a body exerting attraction or repulsion—a magnetic pole, an electrified sphere, a gravitating particle—is surrounded by a field of force which is very real, though invisible, so there are invisible lines that connect such an intellectual center as the library with every interest in the community. We recognize this in our colloquial speech. Did you never hear of a network of branch libraries? Yet on a map they show merely a system of dots. The net-

work is formed of the commingling fields of force, which together enmesh the community in a web of intellectual influences. And as an ordinary force has two aspects, so the influences radiating from our library centers are directed both from and toward them. The up-to-date library strikes out toward every member of the community and it strives to draw each one to itself. It sends its books into every home, its helpful aids to reading and to study, its library news and gossip in the local paper: but on the other hand, its cozy rooms, its well-stocked reference shelves, its willing and pleasant attendants exert on every man, woman and child in the community an intellectual attraction, and having let them taste of the delights it has to offer sends him out again as a willing missionary to lure in others. By such methods should the library strive to be a center of mental development in a community; by such methods is it succeeding, for no other center can vie with it in the universality of its appeal, whether we follow the individual from birth to death, or regard the various members of a community as they exist at one specified time.

But there is another sense in which the library should be and is able to serve as the intellectual center of a community. A community's moral and intellectual status is not simply the sum of that of its component members. This is true of all aggregates where the components are interrelated in any way. In all such cases the properties of the whole depend, it is true, on the properties of the components, but not by simple addition. The taste of common salt is not the taste of sodium added to that of chlorine; the feelings, thoughts and acts of any aggregate of men may be quite different from those of the men taken individually. This is true whether the aggregate be simply a body of spectators in a theater, mutually

related only by the fact of their common presence in the place, or an association, or the members of a municipal community. The human aggregate is in all cases less advanced than the individual; it is more primitive in its emotions, its morals, its acts. This might be expected, since the formal group, of whatever kind, began its evolution later than the individual. A community's moral sense is thus less advanced than that of its members; it will lie, swindle and steal, when they would hesitate to do so; it will resort to violence sooner than they. Its intellectual ability is also less; its business transactions are looser; its appreciation of artistic values is inferior.

The education of a group of men, as a group, is thus something different from the education of its individual members. In the case of a loose group, such as an audience, it could not be attempted; with a group dwelling together and bound by ties of blood and common interest it is not only possible but quite worth while.

Of course it must be understood that whatever educates the individual also helps to educate the community; but when, as is almost always the case, the community lags behind, something may be done to bring its ideals, feelings and acts nearer to the individual standard, even without altering the latter.

Now we have already been reminded by Prof. Vincent of Chicago university that the library may act as the social memory; the town library should therefore be emphatically the municipal memory. And as memory is the basis of our intellectual life, so a communal memory of this kind will serve as the basis of the community's intellectual life and as a means through which it may be fostered and advanced. As the individual looks back with interest on his own personal history and refreshes his recollection by

means of family portraits, old letters, diaries, scrapbooks and material of all kinds, so the community should retain consciousness of the continuity of its own history by keeping in the public library full records of similar import—files of all local publications, printed memorabilia of all kinds, material for local history, even to the point of imagined triviality; even private letters, when these bear in any way on the community life. The legal and political history, or, at last, its dry bones, is locked up in the official archives or the town or city; we need, in addition, an intellectual and social hall of records out of which the delver in local history may clothe this skeleton with flesh and blood.

A man with a memory has the basis for a mind and a conscience; so a community with this kind of a collective memory is much more apt than another to develop collective intelligence and collective morality. It may be asserted, not as a figure of speech, but as a cold fact, that a community whose citizens look back upon an honorable history with records preserved in an accessible place, ought to be much less likely to sanction a trolley steal or to wink at official graft.

In a recent striking address, Prof. William James has called attention to the importance of the things that may serve to unlock stores of reserve energy. When the runner's fatigue has increased up to a certain point he all at once gets, as we say, his "second wind"—something to enable him to draw on a reserve energy. These reserves, Prof. James tells us, we all possess, especially in matters of the intellect and morals; they may be unlocked by ideas, sentiments or objects. The ideas represented by such phrases—catchwords, if you choose to call them so—as love, mother, home, liberty, church, the old flag; righteousness, civic duty—have had a power in setting energy

free and accomplishing results, that is beyond estimation. In regarding the library as a center of municipal education we make it a storehouse of objects and records, with their associated ideas and sentiments, that are competent to act in just this way. A man who feels that he is a "citizen of no mean city," who has been made to realize it from earliest childhood, whose mind turns habitually to the storehouse that has done most to make him realize it, is a nobler man, and the community of which he is a part is a nobler community, than if such a place were non-existent, or if its records and associations were scattered and unheeded. This is a most cogent reason for making the library the intellectual center of the town, as the town hall is the political and the church the religious center; for seeing in it not alone a collection of books, however good, that are given out to those who ask for them but a means for guiding and leading the town's intellectual progress, for turning it from trivialities to what is worth while, caring for the children's reading, stimulating public thought by lectures, endeavoring by every legitimate means to attract toward it the public eye in regard to all things that contribute to individual and civic development.

The most important part of our education, says Emil Reich, we gain after we are twenty-five years old. We cannot prevent the acquisition of such a post-graduate education by every young man and young woman in the town. The question is not: Shall the mind be trained? Shall character be developed? It is rather, How and by what means shall the development go on? Under what auspices shall it take place and toward what end shall it point? Shall it deal in trivialities and end in vacuity? Shall it impart insincerity, dishonesty, uncleanliness?

Shall its product be a useless citizen, an indifferent one, a positively harmful one?

The answers to these questions depend on the home, the church, the school—a score, perhaps, of minor civic societies. Let us at the very center of the town's mental and moral life erect an institution, which, having as its basal object the collection, preservation and popularization of the records of what has been worth while in the past, may serve also as a support to what is good in the present, and a ladder on which the community may mount to still better things in the future. Is this too large, too serious a view to take of the importance of the public library? That will depend on what we choose to make of it—a mere pile of books to be turned over by the passerby, or a true center of municipal education.

THE LIBRARIAN AS A CENSOR*

"SOME are born great; some achieve greatness; some have greatness thrust upon them." It is in this last way that the librarian has become a censor of literature. Originally the custodian of volumes placed in his care by others, he has ended by becoming in these latter days much else, including a selector and a distributor, his duties in the former capacity being greatly influenced and modified by the expansion of his field in the latter. As the library's audience becomes larger, as its educational functions spread and are brought to bear on more of the young and immature, the duty of sifting its material becomes more imperative. I am not referring now to the necessity of selection imposed upon us by lack of funds. A man with five dollars to spend can buy only five dollars' worth from a stock worth a hundred, and it is unfair to say that he has "rejected" the unbought ninety-five dollars' worth. Such a selection scarcely involves censorship, and we may cheerfully agree with those who say that from this point of view the librarian is not called upon to be a censor at all. But there is another point of view. A man, we will say, is black-balled at a club because of some unsavory incident in his life. Is it fair to class him simply with the fifty million people who still remain outside of the club? He would, we will say, have been elected but for the incident that was the definite cause of his rejection. So there are books that would have been welcome on our library shelves but for some one objectionable feature, whose

* Presidential address before the American Library Association, Lake Minnetonka Conference, June, 1908.

appearance on examination ensures their exclusion—some glaring misstatement, some immoral tendency, some offensive matter or manner. These are distinctly rejected candidates. And when the library authority, whether librarian, book committee, or paid expert, points out the objectionable feature that bars out an otherwise acceptable book the function exercised is surely censorship.

May any general laws be laid down on this subject?

Let us admit at the outset that there is absolutely no book that may not find its place on the shelves of some library and perform there its appointed function. From this point of view every printed page is a *document,* a record of something, material, as the French say, *pour servir;* from a mass of such material neither falsity, immorality nor indecency can exclude it. I do not speak at this time, therefore, of the library as a storehouse of data for the scholar and the investigator, but rather of the collection for the free use of the general public and especially of collections intended for circulation. It is to these that the censorship to which I have alluded may properly apply and upon these it is generally exercised. I know of no more desirable classification of books for our present purpose than the old three categories —the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. Those books that we desire, we want because they fall under one or more of these three heads—they must be morally beneficial, contain accurate information or satisfy the esthetic sense in its broadest meaning. Conversely we may exclude a book because it lacks goodness, truth or beauty. We may thus reject it on one or more of the three following grounds; badness—that is undesirable moral teaching or effect; falsity—that is, mistakes, errors or misstatements of fact;

and ugliness—matter or manner offensive to our sense of beauty, fitness or decency. The first and third qualities, badness and ugliness, are often wrongly confounded, and as I desire therefore to speak of them together, we will now take up the second, namely, falsity or lack of truth. Strangely enough, among all reasons for excluding books this is perhaps least often heard. Possibly this is because it applies only to non-fiction, and apparently in the minds of many non-fiction is desirable simply because it is what it is. Again, the application of this test to any particular book can generally be made only by an expert. The librarian needs no adviser to tell him whether or not a book is immoral or indecent, but he cannot so easily ascertain whether the statements in a work on history, science or travel are accurate. This lack of expert knowledge is bad enough when inaccuracy or falsity of statement is involuntary on the author's part. But of late we have in increasing numbers a class of books whose authors desire to deceive the public—to make the reader take for authentic history, biography or description what is at best historical fiction. Again, the increasing desire to provide information for children and to interest the large class of adults who are intellectually young but who still prefer truth to fictitious narrative, has produced countless books in which the writer has attempted to state facts, historical, scientific or otherwise, in as simple, and at the same time as striking, language as possible. Unfortunately, with some noteworthy exceptions, persons with comprehensive knowledge of a subject are generally not able to present it in the desired way. Co-operation is therefore necessary, and it is not always properly or thoroughly carried out, even where the necessity for it is realized. Proper co-operation

between the expert and the popularizer involves (1) the selection and statement of the facts by the former; (2) their restatement and arrangement of the latter; and (3) the revision of this arrangement by the former. It is this third process that is often omitted even in serious cyclopedic work, and the result is inaccuracy. Often, however, there is no cooperation at all; the writer picks up his facts from what he considers reliable sources, puts them into eminently readable shape, dwelling on what seem to him striking features, heightening contrasts here and slurring over distinctions or transitions there. This process produces what scientific men call contemptuously "newspaper science," and we have as well newspaper history, newspaper sociology and so on. They fill the pages not only of our daily press, but of our monthly magazines and of too many of the books that stand on our library shelves. It is unfair to blame the newspapers alone for their existence; in fact, some of the best simple presentations of valuable information that we have appear in the daily press. Then there are the text books. Any librarian who has ever tried to select a few of the best of one kind—say elementary arithmetics—to place on his shelves, knows that their name is legion and that differences between them are largely confined to compilers' names and publishers' imprints. In part they are subject to the same sources of error as the popularized works and in addition to the temptation to hasty, scamped or stolen work due to some publisher's or teacher's cupidity. This catalog might be extended indefinitely, but even now we begin to see the possibilities of rejection on the ground of falsity and inaccuracy. I believe that the chief menace to the usefulness of the public libraries lies, not as some believe in the reading of frankly fictitious narrative,

but in the use of false or misleading history, biography, science and art. Not the crude or inartistic printing of toy money, but the counterfeiting of real money, is a menace to the circulating medium.

Against such debasement of the sterling coin of literature it is the duty of the librarian to fight; and he cannot do it single-handed. Some things he should and does know; he is able to tell whether the subject matter is presented in such a way as to be of value to his readers; he can tell whether the simple and better known facts of history and science are correctly stated; he is often an authority in one or more subjects in which he is competent to advise as an expert; but only the ideal paragon, sometimes described but never yet incarnated, can qualify simultaneously as an expert in all branches of science, philosophy, art and literature. The librarian must have expert advisers.

Nor are these so difficult to obtain. The men who know are the very ones that are interested in the library's welfare and are likely to help it without compensation. And in the smaller places where the variety and extent of special knowledge is less comprehensive the ground covered by the library's collection is also less, and the advice that it needs is simpler. The advice should if possible be personal and definite. No amount of lists, I care not who prepares or annotates them, can take the place of the friend at one's elbow who is able and willing to give aid just when and exactly where it is needed. As well might the world's rulers dismiss all their cabinet ministers and govern from textbooks on law and ethics. The formula, the treatise, the bibliography—we must still have all these, but they must be supplemented by personal advice. And competent advisers exist, as I have said, in almost every place. The local clergy

on questions of religion, and often on others, too; the school principal on history and economics, the organist on music, the village doctor on science—some such men will always be found able and glad to give advice on these subjects or some others; and the place is small indeed that does not include one or two enthusiasts, collectors of insects or minerals or antiquities, who have made themselves little authorities on their pet hobbies and may possibly be the greatest or the only living authorities on those local phases that particularly interest the local librarian. It will do the librarian no harm to hunt these men out and ask their aid; possibly his own horizon will broaden a little with the task and his respect for the community in which he works will grow as he performs it.

But what if two of our doctors disagree? Then follow the advice of both. It might be disastrous for a patient to take two kinds of medicine, but it can never hurt a library to contain books on both sides of a question, whether it be one of historical fact, of religious dogma, or of scientific theory. This may not be pressed too far; the following of one side may be beneath our notice. It is not absolutely necessary, for instance, for a small popular circulating library to contain works in advocacy of the flatness of the earth or of the tenets of the angel dancers of Hackensack; but it is essential that such a library should make accessible to its readers the facts of the Reformation as stated by both Catholic and Protestant writers, histories of the American Civil War written from both the southern and northern standpoints, geological works both asserting and denying the existence of a molten core in the earth's interior. An impartial book is hard to find; it is a thing of value, but I am not sure that two partisan books, one on each side, with the reader as judge, do not constitute

a winning combination. Against violent and personal polemics, of course, the librarian must set his face. All such are candidates for rejection. It is fortunate for us in this regard that we are supplying the needs of all creeds, all classes and all schools. Each must and should have its own literature while each protests against violent attacks on its own tenets. Such protests, while often unjustified, are helping us to weed out our collections.

So much for deficiency in truth as a cause for rejection. Now let us consider deficiency in goodness and deficiency in beauty; or stated positively, badness and ugliness. These two things are confounded by many of us. Is this because the great majority of librarians to-day are of the sex that judges largely by intuition and often by instinctive notions of beauty and fitness? To most women, I believe all ugliness is sinful, and all sin is ugly. Now sin is morally ugly, without doubt, but it may not be esthetically so. And goodness may be esthetically repulsive. Badness and ugliness in books are both adequate grounds for rejection, but they need not coexist. Some of the worst books are artistically praiseworthy and would be well worth a place of honor on our shelves if their beauty alone were to move us. On the other hand, some books that are full of impropriety or even of indecency are absolutely unimpeachable from a moral standpoint.

Shakespeare and the Bible are often indecent without being in the least immoral. "Raffles" is in no wise indecent, but is dangerously immoral. Bernard Shaw is often both indecent and immoral while at the same time so astoundingly clever that we stand gaping at him with our mouths wide open while he tosses down our throats the most unsavory things.

What, then, is the distinction between badness

and ugliness? For our present purpose I believe it to be this: badness depends on immutable laws, while ugliness, at any rate that of the kind which concerns us here, is a matter of convention. Virtue, with all due apologies to Mr. Lecky and to many other eminent scholars, has certain standards that do not vary with place or time. Let us grant that a given act may be good to-day and bad to-morrow, good in Tasmania and bad in Pennsylvania; this is beside the question. We have here to do with the classification of this particular act in certain fixed categories that of themselves remain bad or good. The act of cutting off a man's head may be good if the cutter is the public executioner, and bad if he be a private citizen; one may shoot an attacking highwayman but not an innocent friend. The reason for these differences, however, is that in one case the killing is murder while in the other it is not; murder itself always was and always will be bad.

Impropriety or indecency, on the other hand, is purely arbitrary. Personally I am inclined to think this true of all beauty, but it is unnecessary to obtrude this view here. Impropriety is a violation of certain social customs, and although I should be the last to question the observance of those customs, we must grant, I think, that they rest on foundations quite other than those of right and wrong. In fact decency, instead of being on the same plane with morality, comes nearer to being properly ranked with those fixed categories mentioned above, which are themselves always good or bad, but which may or may not include a given act, according to circumstances. Murder is always bad, but whether the taking of life is or is not murder depends on the circumstances; it may depend entirely on motive. So indecency is always bad, but whether a given act or object

is or is not indecent depends on circumstances; it may depend not only on motive but on locality or environment. Objects and acts of the highest sanctity in one country may be regarded as low and vulgar in another—the standard varies from class to class, from one occupation to another; almost from family to family. One may mention, in all innocence, that which may bring a blush to the cheek of some listener, simply because of this instability of standard in the matter of impropriety. To this class of things particularly refers the celebrated dictum: "There is no thing in heaven or earth, Horatio, but thinking makes it so." This is unexceptionable Christian Science, but it is not quite true. A higher authority than Shakespeare has asserted that by thinking one cannot make a single hair white or black; and this surely accords with the results of experience. Likewise no one by thinking can make badness goodness or the reverse. But whether a thing be improper or not depends entirely on thinking. Thinking makes it so. It is improper for a Mohammedan woman to expose her face in public because she thinks it is, and because that thought is an ingrained part of her existence. But although the Persian sect of Assassins thought with all their hearts that murder was good, it was still very evil. Are we getting too far away from the censorship of books? I think not. See the bearing of all this.

If a book is really bad—if it teaches that evil is good or that it makes no difference—it ought to be rejected uncompromisingly, despite the fact that it is void of impropriety or even artistically admirable. But if it is morally unobjectionable and yet contains that which is improper or indecent, it is then proper to inquire whether the degree and kind of this indecency is such as to condemn it, particularly taking in-

to account the condition, the intelligence and the age of those who would be likely to read it, and also the time and the readers for whom, if it is an old book, its author originally wrote it. With increasing civilization there are certain things that become more and more indecent, and others that become less and less so, owing to the shifting of points of view.

Let us now take up more specifically moral badness as a cause for rejection. We occasionally meet people who hold that the mention of anything morally bad in a book condemns it; while, on the other hand, some would admit books whose atmosphere reeks with evil; whose bad characters live bad lives and speak bad thoughts, so long as the writer in his own person does not commend evil or teach that it is good. Both these extremes are to be avoided. Surely we have outlived the idea that innocence and ignorance are the same thing. "You can't touch pitch," says the proverb, "and not be defiled." Granted; yet we may look at pitch, or any other dirt, and locate it, without harm; nay, we must do so if we want to keep out of it. This is not saying that it is well to seek out descriptions of evil, or to dwell on them, in a work of fiction. Things necessary in the study of medicine, folk-lore or law may be abhorrent in a narrative intended for amusement, although the advent of the "problem" novel—the type of fiction in which the narrative form is often merely the sugar coating for the pill—introduces confusion here into any rule that we may lay down. But however foolish it is to insist that the very existence of evil be concealed from readers of fiction, since evil is a normal constituent of the world as we find it, it is certainly fair to object to a dwelling upon evil phases of life to such an extent that the resulting impression is a distortion of the truth. This distortion may be so

great as to make it proper to reject the book wholly on the ground of falsity. A filling of the canvas with lurid tints is apt to convey—or at any rate is often so done as to convey—the idea that the existence of the evil that the writer depicts is a matter of indifference. A man need not stop to assert his belief that theft is wrong whenever he tells the story of a robbery, but it is quite possible to tell a tale of theft in such a way as to leave an impression that it is a venial offense and to weaken in the reader the moral inhibition that must be his chief reliance in time of temptation. And for "theft" here we may substitute any form of moral dereliction that you may desire. One of the most potent vehicles of moral downfall of any kind is the impression that "everybody does it"—that some particular form of wrongdoing is well-nigh universal and is looked upon with leniency by society in general. The man who steals from his employer or who elopes with his neighbor's wife is nine times out of ten a willing convert to this view. A book that conveys such an idea is really more dangerous than one which openly advocates wrong doing. There can be little difference of opinion here. There may be more in regard to the policy of telling the whole truth regarding a state of things that is morally very bad. It may be fatal to a patient to let him know how ill he is. And may it not also be injurious to a young man or a young woman to expose the amount of evil that really lies before them in this world? There is plausibility in this argument, but it is out of date. There is much philosophy in the modern paradoxical slang phrase: "Cheer up! the worst is yet to come!" And indeed if there is any superlative badness ahead of us, it is better that we should know it, rather than cultivate a false cheerfulness, based on misinformation, with the certainty of disillusionment. The Egyptians

were right when they set a skeleton at their feasts. It was not to make the feasts gloomy, but to make the skeleton a familiar object by association; to accustom the feasters to think about death, how to avoid it as long as possible and how to meet it when inevitable. We should therefore welcome the truth in any book, unless it is that "half truth," which the poet tells us is "ever the blackest of lies," or unless it is so stated as to violate the canons of decency, in which case, as we have already seen, its rejection must be based on different considerations entirely.

It is these canons of decency, after all, that give the librarian his sleepless nights, not only because they are so frequently confounded with canons of morality, but because, as we have already seen, they are arbitrary and variable. Consider the one case of French fiction. Mr. Wister has told librarians that all subjects are "fit for fiction." This is interesting as an academic thesis, but when the French proceed to act upon it, the Anglo-Saxon catches his breath. Books, like men, when they are in Rome must do as the Romans do, and whatever may be proper in Paris, an American public library is justified in requiring its books to respect American prejudices. This is true, at any rate, of books in the English language, even if they are translations from a tongue whose users have other customs and other prejudices. But how about these books in the original? Can we assume that books in the French language are for Frenchmen and that our censorship of them is to be from the French and not the American point of view? Or shall we hold that they are to be read wholly or in part by persons whose mother-tongue is English and whose ideas of the proprieties are Anglo-Saxon? And shall we bear in mind also that the reading public of a work of French fiction excludes in France the "young per-

son" of whom the American library public is largely made up? This is only one of the perplexing questions that confront the American librarian in this field. Every one must struggle with it for himself, having in mind the force and direction of his own local sentiment; but few public libraries are treating it consistently and systematically. Probably, however, many librarians are placing on open shelves books in foreign languages, whose translations into English they would be inclined to restrict. In some cases, of course, appeal to a wholly foreign group of readers, with their foreign point of view, may be assumed, as in the case of a Russian collection on the East Side of New York; though even here it is a question of whether this is not a good place to prepare these readers for a change in library "folkways"—to use Professor Sumner's expressive word.

Nor must we forget that our own ideas of propriety are constantly changing. Take the single instance of the use, in literature, of words regarded as profane or vulgar. Most of us can recollect a time when our acquaintances were likely to be shocked by the occurrence in a book of the expletive "damn"—that is, if it were spelled out. It was generally held to be unobjectionable, or at least less objectionable, if the second and third letters were replaced by a dash. Evidently this is the purest convention. This and worse words appear now, not without shocking some persons, to be sure, but certainly without shocking many of those who formerly would not have tolerated them. On the other hand, it would not be difficult to instance words formerly common in good literature whose use would now cause something of a sensation. There are also good people who will read unmoved surprising words and expressions when put into the mouth of a cowboy or a Klondike miner,

but whose gorge would rise if the same words were employed by a writer *in propria persona.*

What is true of words is true also of subjects. That which could not be touched upon yesterday is discussed freely to-day, and *vice-versa.* No way of dealing with the situation will fail to offend some one, and the only approximation to satisfaction will be gained by the use of common sense applied to each case as it comes up.

Indecency, of course, is not the only offense against beauty that a book may commit. It may be trashy, that is, its subject matter or the manner in which it is treated may be trivial and worthless. The dust of the street is neither beautiful nor valuable, although it may contain nothing injurious to health or repulsive to the senses. The diction of the book may offend against beauty and order by its incorrectness; its paper, its typography, its binding, its illustrations may all be offensive to the eye. These last are mere matters of outward show, to be sure; it may be necessary to disregard them. They are usually reasons for excluding an edition rather than a book, though sometimes the only obtainable edition offends in so many of these ways as to make it unpurchasable, even if otherwise desirable. So far as they militate against the usefulness of the book rather than its beauty, as in the case of the badly sewed binding or paper that is comely but flimsy, they fall under the head of badness rather than that of ugliness—they are offenses against the Good and not against the Beautiful. Such material grounds for rejection, however, are not peculiar to books, and I do not dwell on them here. Ugliness that consists in mere triviality or in incorrectness of diction has this in common with impropriety—it is arbitrary and conventional. With regard to language, this is obvious. The fact

that a certain combination of sounds means one thing in France and another in England and is quite unintelligible perhaps in Spain, is a matter of pure convention, though the convention is sanctioned by long usage. The fact that the double negative is very good Greek and very vulgar English is equally arbitrary. These conventions have become serious things with us; they are of prime importance in the consideration of books, but it is desirable that we should classify them correctly.

With regard to triviality the case is not so clear, yet I feel strongly that it is a relative, not an absolute, quality. The term should be classed with that other misused word—superficiality. No book, of course, and no mind is absolutely thorough, and the lesser grades of knowledge are as important in their place as the higher. What we should condemn is not that a man, or a book, possesses a certain slight degree of knowledge or of ability, but the fact that, possessing it, he believes or represents it to be a higher degree. A man desires, we will say, to memorize the Russian alphabet, so that he may read the proper names on book titles. Is he to be condemned because he knows no more of Russian? Another wishes to wield a hammer dextrously enough to drive a nail without smashing his fingers. Is he "superficial" because he is not an expert cabinet-maker? Still another has learned to play the piano well enough to amuse himself in his idle hours. Does his lack of skill lay him open to the charge of "superficiality?" These people may, it is true, think that they are respectively a Russian scholar, a skilled carpenter, and a good pianist; then and then only are they culpable. The "superficiality," in other words, consists in mistaking a lesser degree of knowledge for a higher or in thinking that the lesser degree suffices for something that requires

the higher—not in the mere limitation of the possessor. A superficial book is that which, skimming the surface of the subject, persuades the reader that he has gone into its depths; as for the skimming itself, that might be quite adequate and sufficient for some purposes. So with "triviality." Nothing is trivial that has an aim and accomplishes it; as for the gradation of aims from unimportant up to important, I leave that to others. Who shall say whether the passing of an idle hour or the addition of a few facts to one's store of knowledge is the more important? The idle hour may be the recreation period of a hard-working mind, without which it might break down from over-pressure, leaving to less competent minds the completion of its useful labor. The few facts might be quite unfruitful. This is why we should hesitate to condemn a trivial book that has beauty of form or some other positive virtue to commend it. Triviality is objectionable only when it masquerades as importance. Perhaps it would be better to say: a book that pretends to excellence along any line where it is really valueless is a dangerous book. This brings us back to Truth as a criterion of excellence, for such a book is a hypocritical or false book, as much as if it definitely asserted as a fact that which is untrue.

When a book, therefore, comes up as a candidate for omission from the purchasing list, or perhaps for exclusion after it has actually been placed on the shelves, the librarian's first duty is to inquire whether it is objectionable because of falsity, of evil morality or of impropriety. The first question may be determinable only by reference to an expert. If the second is alleged, it is well to inquire whether the supposed immorality of the book be not in fact simply impropriety, and if impropriety is the only objection,

whether it is of kind and amount likely to be properly offensive. If the charge of immorality is sustained I see no place for the book on the shelves of a public circulating library.

What has been said may seem to need rounding out with specific illustrations and instances, but it is particularly desirable to avoid here anything in the nature of purely personal opinion and prejudice. It might be possible of course to define the content of certain well-known works by their conformity or non-conformity with the canons above laid down, without attempting to settle the question, at the moment, whether the degree of non-conformity, if it exists, is high enough to make exclusion from a public library desirable or necessary. From this point of view Othello, we will say, is a play teaching a moral lesson, in doing which it discusses sin, but never with approval, expressed or implied. The author uses words and expressions not in accordance with modern standards of propriety, although not contrary to those of his own time. In like manner Boccacio's "Decameron" may be characterized as a collection of short stories connected by thin narrative, often telling of wrongdoing in a manner clearly implying that it is usual and unobjectionable, with use of words and incidents frequently contrary not only to modern ideas of propriety, but also to those of the author's time, except in the dissolute circles for which the tales were originally written. Some of the stories, however, teach morality, and the literary style and method are beautiful and commendable, while the pictures of society are truthful. The implications of customary vice are simply reflections of life as the author knew it. "Gil Blas," by Le Sage, continuing in this vein, we may call a tale of adventure in which everything is set down as it happens,

good, bad and indifferent; important and trivial, with a hero who is somewhat of a rogue, although the wickedness is incidental and is described in such a way that the reader never mistakes it for virtue even when the writer tells it with a relish. The implication that wrongdoing is common, though undoubtedly conveyed, leaves the impression only that it is common among the people and under the circumstances of the tale, which is undoubtedly correct.

It would greatly aid the library censor if he could have annotations of this sort on all books intended for promiscuous public circulation. For this purpose, in fact, all literature should be evaluated by the light of this one color of the critical spectrum. The two or three books just noted possess at least some of the elements of greatness; yet good people differ regarding the extent to which they should be made freely accessible to the general public. I have tried to set down regarding them data on which all may agree, for the purpose of impressing upon you the fact that disagreement is not so much regarding the data as regarding the application to them of principles which, if they have been stated correctly, are few, simple and readily accepted.

We have been lightly skimming the surface of a subject vital to all who have to do with the production and distribution of books—to authors, editors, publishers, booksellers, and above all to us librarians. The ranks of readers are swelling to-day; it is our boast that we are doing our best to swell them. They are recruited from classes whose literature—if we may so extend the term—has been oral rather than written, whose standards of propriety are sometimes those of an earlier and grosser age, whose ideas of right and wrong are beclouded by ignorance and distorted by prejudice. And at the same time hosts of

our people, with little background of hereditary refinement to steady them, have become suddenly rich, "beyond the dreams of avarice." The shock has upset their ideas and their standards. Riches have come so suddenly and so vastly even to the educated, to those whose culture dates back for generations, that it has overturned their ideals also. Our literature is menaced both from below and from above. Books that distinctly commend what is wrong, that teach how to sin and tell how pleasant sin is, sometimes with and sometimes without the added sauce of impropriety, are increasingly popular, tempting the author to imitate them, the publishers to produce, the booksellers to exploit. Thank heaven they do not tempt the librarian. Here at last is a purveyor of books who has no interest in distributing what is not clean, honest, and true. The librarian may, if he will—and he does—say to this menacing tide, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther."

HOW TO RAISE THE STANDARD OF BOOK SELECTION*

If a man is to improve himself, he must first realize his own deficiencies; in other words, he must know what he ought to be, and how and in what degree he falls short of it.

First, then, what are the best books; and do we get them?

"Best" here as always is a relative term; what is best for one may not be best for another, or for all. We hear "good books" gravely recommended to people who will not read them, and who could not extract the good from them if they did read them. When the book fits the man, provided he is a good man, it is a good book, *ipso facto.*

You remember the tale of the rural parish priest at dinner with his bishop. The host, desiring to poke a little quiet fun, asked him whether it were lawful to baptize a man in soup. "I should make a distinction," calmly answered the priest; "if it were good thick soup, I should say not; if it were wishy-washy stuff like this we are eating, it would be quite proper."

So long as we do not realize that the same literary consistency is not adapted both to nutrition and to immersion we shall not be able to decide on what are the best books.

But is there no general line of division between bad and good books?

I can give but a few, but I venture to lay down

* Read at a meeting of the library commissions of the New England States, Hartford, Conn., February 11, 1909.

one or two simple rules for testing. My tests would be—

(1) The test of language. No book can be good that is not written in correct English. By this I mean, of course, that the author himself must speak correctly; his characters may be ignorant persons and he will naturally make them talk accordingly.

(2) The test of simplicity and clearness. No book can be good whose author expresses himself in words that are too large for his subject or in sentences that are so involved that they cannot be easily understood.

(3) The best of good taste. No book can be good whose author uses words or expressions that would not be used by cultivated people.

(4) The test of truth. No book can be good whose subject matter is false; or, in case of fiction, whose manner of telling is such as to make it seem absurdly improbable. The plot of the book may, it is true, lack probability. It may be frankly improbable like a fairy tale, but the author must not seem to lose faith in it himself, and no matter how impossible his foundation the structure that he builds on it must hold together.

I venture to say that if a book survives these tests—if it is simply and clearly expressed in good English and in the best taste and is consistently put together—it cannot be a bad book so far as style goes.

So far as the subject matter of the book is concerned, my test would be simply that of its effect on the reader. If a book makes the reader want to be mischievous, foolish or criminal—to be a silly or bad man or woman, or if it tends to make him do his daily work badly, it is a bad book and all the worse in this case if it is interesting and fascinating in style. But even here the trouble is largely in the manner of treatment. A book may tell of crime and criminals

in such a way as to make the reader detest both or feel an attraction toward both. In this case, as the scripture says, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." If a book sends a boy out to be a burglar, it is bad; if it impels him to take a crying child by the hand and lead it home, it is good. And here let me say that this compelling power, this effective result of a book should speak in its favor though all other tests be against it. Musicians tell us that a great composer may write a work that breaks every rule of harmony and yet be a work of genius. Genius knows no rules.

So much for the general line of cleavage. But the special may for the moment exclude all the claims of the general. A community may be in crying need of books on a given subject—pottery or rowboats or hygiene. This need may or may not be realized by the community, but its existence makes a special class of books the best, for the moment, for that community. To buy a good collection of minor poets for a town that clamors, or ought to clamor, for books on the electric industries, is to get bad books.

Now do we, under our present system, or lack of system, in selection, get these best books—best both in the general and in the special sense?

What is the matter with the books in the average small library? The trouble is not generally that the books are bad, but that they might easily be better, and by "better" it must be borne in mind that I mean more closely adapted to the legitimate needs of the community. If we go over the shelves of the average small library we shall generally be able to note the following facts:

(1) A considerable portion of the books have not been taken out in long periods. This can easily be ascertained by examining the book-cards or dating-slips. Of course, the non-use of a book does not mean

that it should not be in the library. The fault may be with the readers, not with the book. Non-use, however, does mean that something is the matter. Either the library public has bad taste or is not properly guided, or else a mistake was made in providing it with this particular book.

(2) A considerable number of standard books whose reading should be encouraged will not be found on the shelves. These books are almost always part of the collection, but there are not enough duplicates to supply the demand. At the same time it will be found that the library is adding current books of doubtful value.

(3) Books on large local industries—shoemaking, pottery, agriculture—are often lacking. In such cases there is generally a lack of demand; but this is because the persons who would read such books have learned by experience not to look for them in a public library.

(4) Books in the languages spoken by industrial colonies of foreigners in the neighborhood are usually conspicuous by their absence.

(5) The collections in classes where some technical knowledge is necessary for selection, such, for instance, as the sciences, the arts, or history, often show a lack of intelligence, or, at any rate, a lack of system. There are badly written books and books full of errors; there is lack of uniformity in grade—an advanced mathematical work on electricity, for instance, and very elementary ones on light and sound.

(6) In particular, controverted subjects are represented in a one-sided way; there may be no way for a reader to get at the Catholic story of the Protestant reformation, or the southern view of the civil war, or both sides of the spelling-reform or the woman-suffrage movements. Socialism, vivisection, anti-vac-

cination, the negro question, prohibition, the tariff —all these and a hundred others are represented only in a partisan sense.

(7) There is too much care about the outward garb of decency and too little about the pervading atmosphere of morality. Books that describe in decorous language ingenious methods of shop-lifting are given place, but you look in vain for works of lofty moral tone couched in diction that is occasionally coarse.

How far are these faults due to methods of book selection? One of the troubles seems to be that the book-selecting body does not avail itself of expert advice as much as it ought. The librarian is learning, to be sure, to use lists and printed aids more and more, though they are rarely used with discrimination; but supplementary to such lists as these, especially since they so largely lack the personal element, we need the personal advice of experts. If the lists and reviews will leave us in the dark about the man who advises us to buy books on engineering or art, we must go to someone who we know understands these subjects, at least knows a little more of them than we do ourselves. There are, in general, two grades of expert advice. The first is that received from the man who is personally familiar with the current literature of his specialty, who watches the books as they appear and who sends to the library the titles that he thinks it ought to have. This grade of expert service is very difficult to obtain. I have found few men in my experience who are able and willing to give it. Those who have the good-will and the time have usually not the knowledge; those who have the knowledge are busy men who cannot give the time.

The second grade of expert aid is that which pronounces on concrete cases, which decides whether a

given book (either from inspection of the mere title or of the volume itself) is suitable for the library. This kind of aid is not difficult to obtain, and there are persons in almost every place qualified in some degree to give it. It requires, however, a preliminary selection and generally the obtaining of books on approval, which is easier in a large place than a small one.

The library is only one of various institutions that must use expert aid of this kind. The same limitations apply to all. Take, for instance, the work of reference, the cyclopedia, we will say. Its editor cannot write of his own knowledge the articles on Venezuela, and open-hearth steel, and Plato. He must rely on the information, direct or secondhand, of experts. But he cannot allow his experts to write his cyclopedia. Some cyclopedias are written very nearly in that way, and they are not the best. The expert must be coached before he does his work and the work must be edited when finished. It is on the proper combination of expert and editorial work that the value of the finished volumes will depend. So it is with library selection. The librarian is the editor of a big cyclopedia of thousands of volumes. He must have expert aid in selection, but he must not allow his experts to select the library uncontrolled. They must be instructed beforehand, and their advice must be carefully considered after it has been given. It must, in short, be edited. This brings us to the consideration that we have ultimately to face in discussing any phase of human activity—the question of personality. If the librarian and the book committee are incompetent and believe themselves to be competent—then the collection, in spite of all efforts, will reflect their faults—it will be intolerant, or trivial or ill-balanced.

Much, therefore, depends upon the actual book selector for the library. Should this be the librarian, or a committee of the trustees, or the board itself, or an advisory committee of outsiders? Probably the best results are obtained through a preliminary selection made by the librarian with the aid of lists and the advice of individual experts—not committees—as suggested above, and then submitted to some person or committee representing the Board of trustees. This places the final responsibility where it belongs —on the trustees; but with a satisfactory librarian, the duties of the reviewing committee would consist chiefly of deciding on matters of policy—rarely of considering individual titles. It would decide, for instance, on how closely fiction is to be censored, on how far the library is to go in the purchase of recent fiction, on the extent to which foreign languages are to be recognized, on the purchase and duplication of text-books, on the policy of the library with regard to denominational religious works or of controversial books generally—and so on.

Going back for a moment to the question of experts, probably the most difficult advice to procure, with any degree of satisfaction, is regarding fiction, whether in English or in foreign languages. It has been said that one may approve a book simply on the author's name, or even on that of the publisher, and this is still true in isolated cases, but in these days, when both author and publisher are continually trying experiments, continually varying standards and style, each book must be dealt with individually. I do not see how one can decide whether a given novel should or should not be bought for a library without reading it through from cover to cover or hearing a report from someone who has so read it and who understands the wants and limita-

tions of the American public library. This is a line, it seems to me, along which great improvement in our selection is possible; but I confess I do not see my way to an immediate solution of the problem. Possibly this is a good opportunity to say a word for a method of testing the adequacy of one's collection which has scarcely been used as it deserves. One of the most difficult things for a librarian to ascertain is whether his collection is properly distributed among the different classes, and by this I mean, as before, distributed in accordance with the legitimate requirements of the community. It is not possible to find by a statistical method exactly what people need, but it is possible to find out what they want, as indicated by the kind of books that they read. The statistical record of this will be found in the class percentages of circulation. Whether or not the library is equipped to supply this need is indicated by the class percentages of books on the shelves. A comparison of these two percentage tables is always most interesting to the book selector. It does not enable him automatically to select books, but it does indicate points for fruitful investigation. To take some actual cases, I find a library with four per cent of history and six per cent of literature on the shelves, whereas the corresponding circulation percentages are five and seven. This is prima facie evidence that the collections in those two subjects are used rather more than the others and could well be increased. In cases where it is not desirable to encourage circulation in a given class, such an indication should evidently meet with no response. The circulation of fiction always runs far beyond its proportion, and it is neither proper nor desirable for the library to try to keep up. Thus in three libraries where the percentage of adult

fiction on the shelves is 20, 19 and 17, respectively, I find the corresponding circulation percentages to be 34, 35 and 27. What, let us ask ourselves, are library statistics for? Is all the labor concerned in their collection and assemblage to result simply in a table that is to be glanced at for a moment with more or less interested curiosity, or do we intend to do something with them? It sometimes seems that the foreign reproach that we Americans care only for money, which we are properly disposed to resent, is partly justified by the fact that the only statistics that appear to mean anything to us are financial. When a man learns that he is living beyond his income or that he is getting a smaller per cent for his investments than his neighbor, or that the man at the desk next to him is receiving a larger salary for doing the same work, he does not sit still and say, "Ah! how interesting!" He gets up and does something about it. But statistics that convict him of all sorts of incompetency and foolishness along lines other than monetary ones, he regards simply as objects for intellectual absorption.

These percentages, of course, are not the only indications by which a librarian may adjust the proportions of the classes in his collection. If his library has the reserve system, for instance, the call for books in circulation is an unfailing index of the popular demand. If that demand is one that should be heeded, the number of copies in the library may well be proportionate to the number of names on the reserve list.

But a librarian who keeps in continual touch with the public by contact with users at the desk needs none of these somewhat mechanical indications. It is the inestimable privilege of the librarian of a small library in a small community to know her public, its wants, its needs, its abilities and its limitations in a way that is denied to custodians of huge collections.

In closing, let me suggest the following "Don'ts" for selectors of library books:

(1) Don't buy books that are intellectually far above your readers, in the hope of improving their minds; a man may walk up stairs, but he can't jump from the sidewalk to the roof.

(2) Don't buy fine editions of books that need rather to be extensively duplicated; better two good souls than one fine body.

(3) Don't buy McGrath and McCutcheon when you have reserves on file for Dickens and George Eliot.

(4) Don't buy biography in excess because you are fond of it yourself, when a comparison of percentages shows that your supply of travel or applied science is not up to the demand.

(5) Don't buy books in flimsy bindings that will give out after the first issue; work should not be done in gauzy garments.

(6) Don't buy books in very strong bindings when their use is to be light and small; overalls are not suitable for an afternoon tea.

(7) Don't buy "sets" and "libraries;" they are adulterated literature, coffee mixed with chicory.

(8) Don't buy subscription books of an agent at a personal interview; it is the agent's game not to let you think; stand up for your rights and think it over.

(9) Don't estimate public demand by its effect on your own patience; one persistent old gentleman often bulks larger than a crowd of quiet but deserving persons without either push or pull.

(10) Don't buy books of which you are not in immediate need, when you are morally certain that copies in good condition will be thrown on the markets as remainders at one-quarter the original list price.

(11) Don't buy costly "new editions" of reference books without assuring yourself that the newness is more than nominal.

(12) Don't buy novels because you see them advertised in the trolley cars.

(13) Lastly—and this is the most important thing of all—don't get discouraged. Our methods of selecting books, and their results, doubtless need improvement, but so do those of all the other libraries we know. Let us try to realize our deficiencies, and then try to make this year's book list just a little better than the last. If we can succeed in this, the standard will take care of itself.

SYSTEM IN THE LIBRARY*

It has been said by Mr. W. H. Mallock that what we call labor-organizations are mis-named, because their object is, in most cases, the organization not of labor, but of idleness. This somewhat cryptic statement may be understood to mean that trade unions have endeavored usually not to improve the methods and results of labor, nor to make its output larger and more satisfactory, but rather to improve the condition of the laboring man; to make his life more comfortable and his task easier, to shorten hours and lessen output, and often, as a result, to make that output of lower grade.

This will be regarded as a base slander by many people, and it is doubtless exaggerated; yet there is an amount of truth in it that cannot be overlooked by any worker or any combinations of workers—which is the same as saying that it interests almost all of us in this country; for the only Americans able to work who do not work are tramps and a very few millionaires. We shall try to consider its bearing on library workers, but before doing so, it will be well to look at it a little longer in its more general aspect.

Those who desire to improve the worker's condition will justify themselves very properly on economic grounds by saying that to do this is also to improve the methods of work and the quality of the product. No one can do good work who is ill-housed, underfed, improperly clothed or overworked. This is true; but it is not also true that if we make it our

* Read before the Missouri State Library Association, Columbia, October 28, 1909.

primary aim to see that the worker is as comfortable as possible, to lift from him all the difficulties and burdens of his task, we shall also improve his output proportionally. Rather should we do away with that output altogether. We should simply be "organizing idleness." We may consider, as an analogy, the difference between a tariff for revenue and one for protection. The total abolition of import duties is impossible, we are told. They are necessary for revenue. Even England, the world's greatest free-trade country, has import duties. Very true, but the amount of the duty and the objects on which it is laid will differ absolutely according to its purpose. Again, we will suppose that the same company owns an elevated railway and a surface trolley line. They will naturally, if left to themselves, adjust fares, speed and stops on the former so as to induce a larger proportion of people to travel by the slower surface line, which is less expensive to operate. If the surface line were owned by a rival company, there would be an entirely different schedule of fares, speed and stops on the elevated road, intended to crowd it with passengers and to derive the largest possible revenue from it alone.

In like manner, we must doubtless look out for the worker; and he must doubtless look out for himself. His conditions of life and work must be made such that he will perform his task as well as possible. But those conditions will be adjusted quite differently if we regard the comfort of the worker as the prime object from what they will be if we regard the excellence of the output as the prime object and the worker's comfort as a means to that end.

This will bear statement in still another way. We are put into this world to do our appointed tasks, and it is our business to do them as well as we pos-

sibly can. This means that we must take the proper amount of rest, eat good food, keep happy and contented, and all the rest of it. But he who regards his work simply as a means of furnishing him the wherewithal to be happy, to take expensive vacations, live in a fine house, and so on, will neither do his best work, nor will he enjoy the good things of life as he ought.

Our friends, the Socialists, whose propaganda is receiving more attention from thoughtful men to-day than it did a few years ago, both because of the truths that it presents and the menace that it offers to our present civilization, are making the mistake of dwelling upon the importance of the worker's comfort rather than that of the worker's improvement. They promise us that we shall all be in comfortable circumstances and will have to work only three hours a day. Incidentally, the output is to be better. But by putting the matter thus, instead of the other way about, they have appealed to the element of laziness that exists in all men—they have held out the prospect of idleness instead of labor.

I have not lived west of the Mississippi long enough to know whether the same conditions obtain here as in the East; but there, comparing things to-day with what I remember of my boyhood, I seem to see an increasing tendency among all workers to put self first and work second. The policy of "ca' canny," as they call it in Scotland—of "go easy"—doing as little as one can and still keep his job—is creeping in and has secured a firm foothold. It is increasingly difficult to get any kind of work, manual or mental, done really well—so well that one feels like saying, "Well done, thou faithful servant." And yet the shirkers are all anxious to get to the top; and they wonder why they do not. They comfort themselves

by saying that success nowadays is solely a matter of pull. But it is not so. Look around you and you will see, for the most part, men in charge of large enterprises who are efficient, and who have put work before self—men who are engrossed in what they are doing, who love it and therefore do it effectively.

There never was a baser slander than the common assertion that we Americans love money. If we loved the dollar for itself alone, we should never sling it about as we do. We love the excitement and the fun of making money. Look at our working millionaires! They want no more money; they can not use what they have. They enjoy the task of owning and running a great railway system, of organizing and managing some great industrial combination. We may find it necessary to clip their wings a little, but we can not call them lazy and inefficient—they make the job too hard for us. There is no "go easy" policy here, and those who favor it will never get to the top.

Let us hope that this pernicious idea that self is worth more than work will never find a foothold in the library. We see it here and there, but I believe that, taken by and large, library workers love their tasks and that they are efficient in proportion to that love.

As our libraries are growing larger, our organizations more complex, it is, I know, growing harder to take a live personal interest in the work, so much of it is specialized routine; one feels like a mere cog-wheel in a great machine. Th assistant who pastes labels or addresses postal cards in a big library, finds it harder to realize that she is doing something interesting and useful than the librarian of a small library who not only performs these tasks but all the others—meets her public, selects and buys her books,

plans in one way and another for the extension and betterment of her work. Yet the rapid, accurate and efficient performance of the lesser task is as important as that of the greater. A label pasted awry may ruin the library's reputation in the eye of a casual user; a mis-sent card may cause trouble to dozens of one's fellow-assistants. Routine work is dull only when one does not understand its purport. Dullness is in the worker, not in the work.

Are libraries, indeed, introducing too much organization into the work—is it becoming too machine-like? Now, it should not be forgotten that there is in a machine something akin to personality—individuality, at any rate, is not too strong a word. Every locomotive has tricks and characteristics that its engineer knows and sometimes loves. He pats its back affectionately and speaks of it as "she." The idea that to be part of a machine excludes personality and individual work is all wrong. One can not go careering about eccentrically and unsystematically; the very purpose of organization is to stop all that; but within the limits of motion and action assigned to a person as his part in the larger motion and action of the machine, there is still room for moving well or ill, for helping on the greater work or antagonizing it and throwing it out of order. If a cog-wheel thinks that it is manifesting its originality in some meritorious way by making the whole machine creak and wobble and turn out an inferior product, that cog-wheel has power to do just this; but it should not complain if the machinist throws it into the scrap heap.

Now, in the library, the parts of our machine are workers of all kinds; their connection and relationship are conditioned and limited by customs, rules and orders. To test the desirability of these or of

any change in them there is just one question to be asked; first, last and all the time, namely—is this for ourselves or for our work? Is it merely to make things easier for the assistants or will it improve the work and benefit the public?

The asking of this question and its thoughtful consideration will puncture many a bubble. We will take, if you please, the question of vacations. Any one who has tried to make out a vacation schedule in a large library knows that, next to making out a recitation schedule in a large school or college, it is the most vexatious task of the kind that is given to man to do. Everyone must have a vacation, and everyone wants to have it at some time when the efficiency of the library will be impaired by it. Everyone wants to go away at once, and there are times when no one wants to be absent. Any possible arrangement means dissatisfaction, heartburnings, a feeling that favoritism or prejudice has been at work. Into the mind of most librarians has, I am sure, crept the suggestion: What is the use of all this? Why not close the library for a month? Is not that done by the schools: and are not we, too, an educational institution?

The fact that librarians do not yield, in this case, to the suggestion of a change that would benefit them and all their assistants, is, of course, due to the obviousness of the other fact that it would be bad for the public.

This test of the public advantage may be applied to the whole question of system in the library—of how much system is good, and what kind and how it shall be determined and applied. When a man comes in contact with a library rule that incommodes him personally, he is apt to deride it impatiently as "red tape." When he finds absence of a rule where he would have benefited by it, he concludes that the libra-

ry is in "chaos" or "confusion." Now, there should evidently be neither one nor the other of these, although we cannot allow the personal convenience of a single user to be the test—our system should not exist for itself alone, nor should we try to get along without system altogether. There should be just so much and of just such a kind as will result in the maximum degree of service rendered to the public.

The individual user is quite wrong, of course, in condemning a regulation that annoys him personally, for this reason alone; but if we should find that it annoyed all other users as well without other advantage than the saving of some trouble to the library assistant, he would, I conceive, be quite right in calling it "red tape." This term is applied primarily to annoying official restrictions that have no use whatever, but we may well extend it to restrictions that benefit the administrator without improving the administration. Rules, customs and manners of procedure in a library, whether they say "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not" are of two kinds—those addressed to the library staff and those addressed to the public. Both, however, are intended to enable the public to get more good out of the library. The members of the staff are told to do certain things and not to do others, because this will make it easier for the users of the library to get what they want. The latter in turn are bidden to do this and forbidden to do that—not, as some of them seem to think, to make the librarian's work easier or to save him trouble—but to throw the library open wider to their fellows. System of this kind may bear very hard on the individual user; he may chafe, for instance, at any restriction in the number of books that he is allowed to borrow—but if no such restriction existed, the privileges of his fellow borrowers would be curtailed

thereby. He may grumble because the time limit on his book has expired before he has finished reading it, unmindful of the fact that some of his fellow readers are anxiously waiting for it. But if the book in his possession is not wanted by anybody; if there are other such unused books in the library that he wants, should he not have and keep them? Assuredly. Every library should make arrangements whereby none of its books should be kept from use to stand idly on the shelves. Our test of public usefulness declares as decisively for this as it does for the partition of privilege in the case of more than one anxious borrower.

To return to that part of the library machine that affects the library staff, I have many times heard assistants complain of incidents of organization and systematization that seemed to them too much like those in vogue in commercial institutions. Now it may be freely admitted that there is a difference between the library and the store or the factory, or more generally between any institution for the public good and one for private gain. In the former the public advantage is the prime object, and to attain it we must often consult the comfort or convenience of the administrators. In the latter, the advantage of the administrators is the prime object, and to gain it they are generally forced to consult the comfort and convenience of the public. The primary and secondary elements are reversed, but they exist in each. Both the department store and the library must look out for the public. It is the library's business to do so, and it is in the store's business advantage to do the same.

It is hard to see, therefore, why any kind of system that will make a store work better is not worth looking into by a librarian. The systematization in

the staff of an up-to-date, modern business organization, and in its work, is a continual surprise to him who has not looked into such things for a score of years. The stores and the factories are ahead of librarians in this respect, and we may as well admit it. After all, this is natural. What is to one's business advantage is always done better than what is merely one's business. But there is no reason why we should not study these better methods and imitate those that are worth copying.

Take one little example. In a factory the raw material is followed statistically from its purchase to its sale as a finished product; and even after its sale its performances are watched. The owner can find out, when he wants to do so, whether that particular article made or lost money for the firm, and how much, and why; whether it gave satisfaction to the purchaser, and if not, why not; to what its excellence or deficiencies were due, whether to the qualities of the raw material or the methods of manufacture. How many librarians can similarly ascertain whether the purchase of a given invoice of books was profitable to the library or not, taking into account the number and duration of their issues, the time lost and the money spent in mending and re-binding them, and so on? How many can tell you whether those books gave satisfaction to the users, in their bindery, typography, and paper; whether the reader found them hard on his eyes, easily soiled, difficult to hold open—and whose fault it was, the publisher's, the binder's or the mender's? This, too, is merely the material and physical side of the question—all that the manufacturer or the merchant needs to consider. We librarians say we are on a loftier plane; we purvey ideas. So we do. How many of us then can say what was the mental and moral effect on our

community of the books added last year, as compared with those added the year before? How many of us know even whether the readers liked the books of one year better than those of another? Again; the individual worker in a good factory, the travelling salesman in a good mercantile house, is watched statistically. His employers can tell just how profitable his work is to them. If the failure of an operation, or the loss of custom in a town, is due to him, they know it, and if his service continues unprofitable, he is replaced. How many librarians watch the work of individual members of the staff with such detail? Suppose at the end of six months' service, an assistant were confronted with statistical evidence that she had mischarged ten books, made eight bad mistakes in accessioning, written twenty catalog cards that had to be replaced and caused four complaints by her bearing at the desk? Suppose she were thereupon given notice that she must do better or go; what would she say? I think I know. She would say that the library was run just like a department store. And she would be quite right; only, instead of being derogatory to the library as it would be intended, her remark would be a compliment. It is time that we should carefully discriminate between what is commercial, in commercial institutions, and what simply makes for orderliness and efficiency.

Now, we may consider three things, belonging to a given institution, that every employee of that institution has in his care. If they are properly conserved the institution will be efficiently administered, and the visible machinery for conserving them constitutes system. They are time, property and reputation. A large part of the system under which any institution is conducted has for its object the utilization of every bit of time. We Americans, with all

our hustling are great wasters of time. Workers do nothing, not so much in periods of actually shirking or laziness as in getting started, in passing from one task to another, in fruitless pottering about, in endeavoring to decide some unimportant question of detail and in one or another of a thousand different ways when they seem to themselves to be at work, while they really are doing nothing useful. As for talking, it is the bane of many different kinds of work. I am inclined to think that all work should be done in silence. Possibly, however, this would be a mistake, for an occasional word keeps workers alive and in good humor where absolute silence is not necessary. It is, however, difficult to stop with a word. Words group themselves into phrases, phrases into sentences and sentences into conversation, and the workers who assert convincingly that they get on exactly as well while they are talking, succeed in cutting in half, not only their own sum total of useful achievement, but that of the annoyed toilers anywhere within earshot. System surely requires close conservation of valuable time; by promptness, by quickness, by keeping the cobwebs from one's brain, and above all, by silence, relative if not absolute.

The property that the librarian is expected to conserve consists of books—the material in which he works and with which he is expected to produce his effects, and of money and objects—buildings, furniture and utensils—intended to aid him in handling the books properly and in getting them and the users together. The Philadelphia alderman who proposed to do away with the buildings, furniture and staff of the library altogether, spend the money for books, dump these on the city-hall floor, and let the public choose, may have been somewhat crude in his ideas; but he at least understood that books are the basis

of a library and that librarians and buildings are but subsidiary. His attitude was vastly more intelligent than that of some persons who appear to think that a good librarian in a fine building ought to produce satisfactory results without any books at all. The librarian, then, must provide above all for the care and preservation of the books. If his library is on open shelves it must assure careful watch against thievery; it must insure, by an adequate charging system, the due return of borrowed volumes; it must see that the physical structure of the book is protected, and repaired when needful; it must watch and count the books at intervals to see that they are all on the shelves. This last means the taking of a regular and careful inventory—the bane of the average librarian. Yet how can he shirk it? Books are valuable property entrusted to his care. If he were custodian of money or funds he would not be let off year after year with the statement that the labor of ascertaining how much remained in his possession was greater than it was worth. One may omit to inventory his private collection, just as he may omit to count the money in his purse, if he chooses, not that of others. And if it is his duty to see that the quantity of his collection remains unimpaired, it is equally so to see to the quality. A library system that counts the books carefully, but esteems a torn and filthy volume as good a unit as one in proper condition, will no longer pass muster.

There are dirty books on too many library shelves. Such libraries are deficient in the kind of system that preserves property efficiently. As for the mechanical plant of the library, the building that houses it, with its fittings and furniture, a proper system, of course, requires that these be kept constantly in good condition. Now, we Americans are impatient of detail:

we like to do things in a large way and then let them take care of themselves. While the Frenchman or the Englishman watches his roads or pavements day by day and never allows them to get out of repair, we build expensive roadways and leave them alone until they are in disgraceful condition—whereupon we tear them up and rebuild them. While the foreigner builds his cities, stone by stone and street by street, so that they are picturesque and beautiful, we let ours spring up as they will, slum jostling palace, and factory elbowing church, until finally we form grandiose projects of reconstruction, cutting avenues here and making parts there—projects which may be carried out and may remain on paper. So I have seen tasteful and expensive library buildings allowed to grow grimy and dilapidated day by day through lack of a systematic plan for renovation and repair. Some day the authorities will wake up and there will be reconstruction and redecoration in plenty—to be followed by another era of slow decay.

The third entity that an efficient system must enable the librarian to conserve is evanescent and almost indefinable. It is difficult to bring system to bear upon it at all, and yet its preservation is of the very highest importance of all, because without it the librarian cannot do the work in his community that every good librarian is trying to do. Reputation is a fickle thing, indeed. Gained sometimes in a happy moment, it may persist for long years, successfully defying all assaults; achieved elsewhere by decades of strenuous application and scrupulous observance, it may vanish in a day as the result of some petty act of forgetfulness or of the stupidity of a passing moment. None the less is it the duty of the head of every great institution to strive continually to attain and maintain it; to increase it if

possible and to guard it jealously. There he is in the hands of his subordinates and such system as he may bring to bear may and should be directed toward creating and keeping alive within them a proper *esprit de corps*. The library that succeeds in creating a public impression that it and all connected with it are honestly trying to be of public service, to win public esteem, and to gain a place in the public heart, has two-thirds of its work done already. Its burden is rolled down hill instead of up.

We boast that in our country public opinion is all powerful; but we are often apt to regard public opinion as we do the weather. Its balmy gales and its destructive vortices, its gentle dews and its devastating torrents, are alike, we think, beyond our power to regulate. Yet, though public opinion may be unjust or capricious, it is usually level-headed. So the library that covets that good reputation which public opinion alone can give it, must so act as to deserve that good opinion. And as one broken cog will throw a whole machine out of gear, so one assistant who does not realize his or her responsibilities in this matter may mar a library's reputation, otherwise well-earned. It is hard luck, indeed, that a librarian, who with the majority of his staff has striven long and well to earn the public good-will, should see it forfeited by the thoughtlessness or ill-temper of some one of his staff. This, however, is the way of our world with its multiple connections. None of us may live for himself alone; we stand or fall with others, and the smallest bit of orange peel may bring down the mightiest athlete to the pavement.

How may the librarian, or anyone else, bring system to bear on such an evanescent thing as this? It is a hard matter, indeed. But can it be denied that a well-oiled library machine, one that is quickly res-

ponsive to direction and control, one whose parts are as perfect in themselves and as perfectly connected as may be, is least likely to suffer from unfortunate accidents? A librarian whose bad judgment—or whose kindness of heart, perhaps—has misled him into admitting into his machine one false cog may find to his sorrow that this will slip at the critical time, betraying both him and the whole engine that he had hoped to wield for good. Here no one kind of system, no particular detail, alone suffices, but every detail, every series, every combination renders the whole fabric of reputation more solid and more secure. I sometimes think that we Anglo-Saxons are in greater need of the inspiration and aid that we get from records of past intellectual achievement than are some other races. For our intellectual heritage does not come at all from our physical ancestry. We are the intellectual heirs of the Greeks, the Romans and the Hebrews, not of our own Teutonic fathers. We can, therefore, not only rely on heredity to maintain our intellectual level; we must continually drink from the same fountains through which our fathers drew inspiration. We sometimes think a little contemptuously of what we call the veneer of modern civilization that the Japanese have put on, forgetting that our own civilization is in great part also acquired, although the acquisition is of earlier date. Moreover, the Japanese have, and retain, intellectual ideals and achievements of their own, having learned from the West hardly more than its mechanics and engineering. On the other hand, our mechanical achievements are our own, our intellectual and esthetic standards are borrowed. Our intellectual status may thus be compared to the electrical condition of the trolley wire, which in order that it may furnish its useful energy to the motor below must it-

self be supplied at intervals with this energy from an adjacent feed wire communicating directly with the source of electrical power. The feed wire in our case is the library—a collection representing the intellectual energy of all past ages, springing directly from the powerful brains of the masters of mental achievement throughout the centuries. Unless we supply our minds from this, we shall not maintain our intellectual position. Is this the reason why the popular library has attained with us a development that it has never reached in Latin countries, whose inhabitants possess through heredity many of the mental standards of value that our ancestors borrowed and that we must borrow ever and again from the records of the past? We may be sure that this is at least a possibility; and we may be equally sure that the adoption of system, both external and internal, will facilitate both this and all other functions of the library. The statement that "the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life" was never intended to mean that we are to neglect formal and systematic methods of work. The letter kills only when it is spiritless, with the spirit to give it life it does well its part, ensuring that the institution to which it applies shall produce its results, surely, quietly and effectively, with a minimum of noise and effort and with a maximum of output. Let no one, then, deride or decry the formation or the operation of a library machine; we live in an age of machinery—of machines formed by effective human co-operation, as well as by interlocking gears and interacting parts. Rudyard Kipling makes his Scotch engineer see in the relentless motion of his links and pistons something of that "foreknowledge infinite" in which his Calvinistic training had taught him to believe and trust. So may we see in library machinery an aid to the accomplishment of that "far-off divine

event" toward which our whole modern library creation has been and is still silently, but no less powerfully moving—the bringing into intellectual relationship of each living human brain within our reach with every other companionable or helpful human brain, though physically inaccessible through death or absence. This is the comprehensive ideal of the librarian; no machinery that may work toward its attainment is superfluous or inept.

THE EXPLOITATION OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY*

Two and a half years ago; or, to be more exact, on January 22, 1909, in an address at the dedication of the Chestnut Hill Branch of the Free library of Philadelphia, the present writer used the following words:

"I confess that I feel uneasy when I realize how little the influence of the public library is understood by those who might try to wield that influence, either for good or for evil . . . So far there has been no concerted, systematic effort on the part of classes or bodies of men to capture the public library, to dictate its policy, to utilize its great opportunities for influencing the public mind. When this ever comes, as it must, we must look out! . . .

"Organizations . . . civil, religious, scientific, political, artistic . . . have usually let us severely alone, where their influence, if they should come into touch with the library, would surely be for good . . . would be exerted along the line of morality, of more careful book selection, of judicial mindedness instead of one-sidedness.

"Let us trust that influences along this line . . . if we are to have influences at all . . . may gain a foothold before the opposite forces . . . those of sordid commercialism, of absurdities, of falsities, of all kinds of self-seeking . . . find out that we are worth their exploitation."

There have been indications of late that the public, both as individuals and in organized bodies, is

* Address before the American Library Association at the Pasadena Conference, May 19, 1911.

beginning to appreciate the influence, actual and potential, of the public library. With this dawning appreciation, as predicted in the lines just quoted, has come increased effort to turn this influence into the channels of personal or of business advantage, and it may be well to call the attention of librarians to this and to warn them against what they must doubtless expect to meet, in increasing measure, as the years go by. Attempts of this kind can hope for success only when they are concealed and come in innocent guise. It is extremely hard to classify them, and this fact in itself would indicate that libraries and librarians have to deal with that most ingenious and plausible of sophists, the modern advertiser.

But in the first place I would not have it understood that the use of the library for advertising purposes is necessarily illegitimate or reprehensible. If it is open and above board and the library receives proper compensation, the question resolves itself into one of good taste. The taste of such use may be beyond question, or it may be very questionable indeed. Few would defend the use of the library's walls or windows for the display of commercial advertising; although the money received therefor might be sorely needed. On the other hand, the issuing of a bulletin paid for wholly or in part by advertisements inserted therein is approved by all, though most librarians doubtless prefer to omit these if the expense can be met by other means. Under this head come also the reception and placing on the shelves of advertising circulars or catalogs containing valuable material of any kind. Here the library gets considerably more than its *quid pro quo*, and no librarian has any doubt of the propriety of such a proceeding.

Again, where the advertising takes the form of a benevolent sort of "log-rolling," the thing advertised

being educational and the *quid pro quo* simply the impulse given to library use by anything of this nature, it is generally regarded as proper. Thus most libraries display without hesitation advertisements of free courses of lectures and the like. When the thing advertised is not free, this procedure is more open to doubt. Personally I should draw the line here, and should allow the library to advertise nothing that requires a fee or payment of any kind, no matter how trifling or nominal and no matter how good the cause.

These things are mentioned only to exclude them from consideration here. The library is really exploited only where it is used to further someone's personal or business ends without adequate return, generally with more or less concealment of purpose, so that the library is without due realization of what it is really doing. Attempts at such exploitation have by no means been lacking in the past. Take if you please this case, dating back about a dozen years: An enterprising firm, operating a department store, offered to give to a branch library a collection of several thousand historical works on condition that these should be kept in a separate alcove plainly labeled "The gift of Blank Brothers." Nothing so unusual about this. Such gifts, though the objections to the conditions are familiar to you all, are frequently offered and accepted. In this instance, however the name of the branch happened to be also the name of the enterprising firm. The inference would have been overpowering that the branch had been named after the firm. The offer was accepted on condition that the books should be shelved each in its proper place with a gift label, to be of special form if desired, and that the donation should be acknowledged on the bulletin board. These conditions were not accept-

able—a sufficient indication of the real object of the gift. Other cases might be cited, to say nothing of the usual efforts to induce the library to display commercial notices or to give official commendation to some book.

Several cases of the more ingenious attempts at exploitation having come to my notice during the past few months I set myself to find out whether anything of the kind had also been noted by others. Letters to some of the principal libraries in the country elicited a variety of replies. Some librarians had noted nothing; others nothing more than usual. One said frankly that if the people had been "working" him he had been too stupid to know it. But others responded with interesting instances, and one or two, in whose judgment I have special confidence agreed with me in noticing an increase in the number of attempts at this kind of exploitation of late.

I may make my meaning more clear, perhaps, by proceeding at once to cite specific instances which must be anonymous, of course, in accordance with a promise to my informants.

A photographer offered to a public library a fine collection of portraits of deceased citizens of the town. This was accepted. The photographer then proceeded to send out circulars in a way that rendered it very probable that he was simply using the library's name to increase his business.

A commercial firm, which had issued a good book on a subject connected with its business, offered to print for various libraries, at its own expense, a good list of works on this subject on condition that it should be allowed to advertise its own book on the last page. Submission of a proof revealed the fact that this advertisement was to be printed in precisely the same form and with the same kind of heading as

information about the library given on the preceding page. The reader's inference would have been that the matter on the last page was an official library note. Of the libraries approached, some accepted the offer without finding any fault with the feature just noted; others refused to have anything at all to do with the plan; still others accepted on condition that the last page should be so altered that the reader could see clearly that it contained advertising matter.

A lecturer gained permission to distribute through a library complimentary tickets to a free lecture on an educational subject. When these arrived, the librarian discovered that the announcement of the free lecture was on the same folder with advertisements of a pay course. The free tickets were given out, but the advertisement was suppressed. Efforts of this kind are perhaps particularly noticeable in connection with the use of library assembly-rooms. There is no reason, of course, why libraries should not rent out these rooms in the same way as other public rooms, but it is usual to limit their use to educational purposes and generally to free public entertainments. Some efforts to circumvent rules of this kind are interesting.

Application was made to a library for the use of an assembly-room for a free lecture on stenography. On cross-examination the lecturer admitted that he was a teacher of stenography who desired to form a class, and that at the close of his lecture he intended to make announcement of his courses, prices, etc. He was told that this must be done outside the library.

It is very common, where the exaction of an admission fee is forbidden, to take up a collection before or after the lecture. When told that this is inadmissible, the lecturer sometimes takes up his

collection on the sidewalk outside. There have been cases where employees of a library have embraced this opportunity to gather contributions. A colored janitor of a branch library was recently admonished for standing outside his own assembly-room door and soliciting money for a pet charity. Another janitor made a pilgrimage to the central library to collect from the staff. A classic instance of this kind is that of the street gamin who for several hours stood at a branch library door and collected an admission fee of one cent from each user. The branch was newly opened and its neighbors were unused to the ways of free libraries.

An example of the difficulty of deciding, in matters of this kind, whether an undoubted advertising scheme may or may not legitimately be aided by the public library is found in the offer, with which all of you are familiar, of valuable money prizes for essays on economic subjects, by a firm of clothiers. The committee in charge of the awards is composed of eminent economists and publicists; the competitors are members of college faculties and advanced graduate students; the essays brought out are of permanent value and are generally published in book form. Under these circumstances many libraries have not hesitated to post the announcements of the committee on their bulletin boards. Others regard the whole thing as purely commercial advertisement and refuse to recognize it. One library at least posted the announcement of the competition for 1910, but refused to post the result. It would be hard to tell just how much altruism and how much selfishness we have here and the instance shows how subtle are the gradations from one motive to the other.

Advertising by securing condemnatory action of some sort, such as exclusion from the shelves, has

also not been uncommon. This requires the aid of the press to condemn, abuse or ridicule the library for its action, and so exploit the book. The press, I grieve to say, has fallen a victim to this scheme more than once and has thereby given free use of advertising space ordinarily worth thousands of dollars. A flagrant instance of this kind occurred in one of our greatest cities about ten years ago. The work of a much-discussed playwright was about to be put upon the boards. A wily press agent, in conversation with an unsuspecting librarian, obtained an adverse opinion. The aiding and abetting newspaper, which was one of ostensible high character, proceeded at once to heap ridicule and contumely on the library and the librarian for their condemnation and exclusion of the play (which really wasn't excluded at all). The matter, having reached the dignity of news, was taken up by other papers and for a week or more the metropolitan press resounded with accusation, explanation, recrimination and comment. The gleeful playwright cabled objurgations from London, and the press agent, retiring modestly into the background, saw advertising that would have cost him $100,000, at the lowest estimate, poured into his willing lap by the yellow, but easy, press of his native burg. It is possibly unfair to cite this as an attempt to "work" the library—it was the public press that was ingeniously and successfully exploited through the library.

The fact that the mere presence of a public library is an advantage to the neighborhood in which it stands has led to numerous attempts to locate library buildings, especially branches, in some particular place. These are often accompanied by offers of building-lots, which, it is sad to say, have occasionally appealed to trustees not fully informed of the

situation. I recall several offers of lots in barren and unoccupied spots—one in an undeveloped region whose owner hoped to make it a residence park and another in the middle of a flourishing cornfield, whose owner considered it an ideal spot for a branch library—at least after he had sold off a sufficient number of building lots on the strength of his generous gift. These particular offers were declined with thanks, but in some instances members of boards of trustees themselves, being only human, have not been entirely free from suspicion of personal or business interest in sites. Here it is difficult to draw the line between the legitimate efforts of a particular locality to capture a branch site and those that have their origin in commercial cupidity. Both of course have nothing to do with the larger considerations that should govern in such location, but both are not exploitation as we are now using the word.

A curious instance of the advertising value of the mere presence of a public library and of business shrewdness in taking advantage of it, comes from a library that calls itself a "shining example of efforts to 'work' public libraries for commercial purposes." This library rents rooms for various objects connected with its work, and finds that it is in great demand as a tenant. Great effort is made by property owners both to retain and to move quarters occupied for library purposes. The board has recently refused to make selection of localities on this basis.

There is another respect in which the public library offers an attractive field for exploitation. In its registration files it has a valuable selected list of names and addresses which may be of service in various ways either as a mailing-list or as a directory. Probably there are no two opinions regarding the impropriety of allowing the list to be used for com-

mercial purposes along either line. The use as a directory may occasionally be legitimate and is allowable after investigation and report to some one in authority. I have known of recourse to library registration lists by the police, to find a fugitive from justice; by private detectives, ostensibly on the same errand; by a wife, looking for her runaway husband; by persons searching for lost relatives; and by creditors on the trail of debtors in hiding. Where there is any doubt, the matter can usually be adjusted by offering to forward a letter to the person sought, or to communicate to that person the seeker's desire and let him respond if he wishes to do so. One thing is certain: except in obedience to an order of court, it is not only unjust, but entirely inexpedient from the library's standpoint to betray to anyone a user's whereabouts against that user's wishes or even where there is a mere possibility of his objection. If it were clearly understood that such consequences might follow the holding of a library card, we should doubtless lose many readers that we especially desire to attract and hold.

Of course the public library is not the only institution whose reputation has exposed it to the assaults of advertisers. The Christian ministry has for years been exposed to this sort of thing, and it is the belief of Reverend William A. Lee, who writes on the subject in "The Standard," a Baptist paper published in Chicago, that in this case also increased activity is to be noted of late. Persons desire to present the minister with a picture on condition that he mentions the artist to his friends; to give him a set of books or a building-lot that his name may be used to lure other purchasers; they even ask him for mailing-lists of his parishioners' names. "I am constantly being besieged," says Mr. Lee, "by agents of divers sorts,

and of divers degrees of persistency, for indorsements of patent mops, of 'wholesome plays,' of current periodicals, of so-called religious books, of 'helps' almost innumerable for church-workers and of scores of other things which time has charitably carried out of memory."

It is refreshing to find that the kind of library exploitation most to be feared seems not yet to have been attempted on any considerable scale or in any objectionable direction. I refer to interference with our stock and its distribution—an effort to divert either purchases or circulation into a particular channel. My attention has been called to the efforts of religious bodies to place their theological or controversial works on the shelves of public libraries. When the books are offered as donations, as is usually the case, this is hardly exploitation in the sense in which we are considering it, unless the library is so small that other more desirable books are excluded. A large library welcomes accessions of this kind, just as it does trade catalogs or railroad literature. Attempts to push circulation are occasionally made, but usually without success.

But up to the present time it is the glory of the public library that it knows neither North nor South, Catholic nor Protestant, Democrat, Republican nor Socialist. It shelves and circulates books on both sides of every possible scientific, economic, religious and sectional controversy, and no one has raised a hand to make it do otherwise. We should be proud of this and very jealous of it. As we have seen, there is some reason to think that newly awakened interest in the public library as a public utility has led to increased effort to gain its aid for purely personal and commercial ends. Naturally these interests have moved first. It is comparatively easy to steer clear

of them and to defeat them. But attempts to interfere with the strict neutrality of the public library and to turn it into partisanship in any direction, if they ever come, should at the earliest betrayal of their purpose be sternly repressed and at the same time be given wide publicity, that we may all be on our guard. We may legitimately and properly adopt a once famous and much ridiculed slogan as our own, in this regard, and write over the doors of our public libraries "All that we ask is, let us alone!"

I should be understood better, perhaps, if I said "Civil service in the library"; but the civil service is so called merely in distinction to the military service, and there can be no military service in the library, although the uniform of certain janitors and messengers may appear, at first sight, to give me the lie. Every library, of course, must have some plan of service, more or less systematic. This may or may not be subject to the regulations of the state or city civil service. I have no desire to dwell here on the question of the desirability of such connection; but I cannot refrain from saying, at the risk of losing all of my civil service-reform friends, that I regard the present methods of bringing about appointment for merit only as makeshifts, well designed to defeat the efforts of politicians and others who wish to see appointments made for other reasons, but necessary only so long as those efforts are likely to continue. I shall doubtless be told that they are likely to continue indefinitely, and therefore that I have given away my whole case. To show that this is not so, we have only to point to a large number of libraries in connection with which there is no such effort, and in which safeguards against it are absolutely unnecessary. I do not know why politics has not invaded these institutions, but I know that it has not. During the past sixteen years I have been connected with four large libraries, and I am in a position to say not only that no political appointment was made in them during my connection, but that no such ap-

pointment was ever attempted or suggested. There is absolutely no reason why the protection of "civil-service" regulation should be thrown over these libraries, and every reason why they should be free from the harassing and embarrassing petty annoyances and restrictions that are inseparable from such regulation.

Much as I honor the advocates of civil-service reform, and applaud what they have accomplished in the way of furthering a real merit system, I submit that a further step in advance may be taken when we have heads of municipal departments as unlikely to make political appointments as the average librarian is, and as free from pressure to make such appointments as are the librarians of a large number of our best institutions. I regard that as the best system, therefore, in which an appointing officer or body, sincerely desirous of making appointments for merit only, is perfectly free to make such appointments in any way that seems proper; and as only the second-best system that in which the appointing power, unwilling to make appointments for merit, is forced to do so, as far as may be, by the supervision and control of a body created for the purpose. So long as we have unwilling municipal officers, we must endure this second-best plan, of course; but librarians are rarely of this kind, though they may be unfortunately in the power of those who are. It has been my good fortune to formulate a scheme of service for each of the four libraries to which I have referred, and these schemes, with necessary modifications, are still in satisfactory use. The first, for the New York Free Circulating Library, was made in 1896; the last, for the St. Louis Public Library, in 1910. Some were hampered by the necessity of adapting them to municipal regulation, while others

were quite free; and other local conditions imposed differences upon them, but they depended, in the main, on the same principles and were carried out in much the same way.

I have numerous requests for information on this subject and for advice upon methods of grading library staffs, with regulation of promotions, increases of salary, etc. Possibly the best way to answer these may be to give a brief account of the way in which the work was done in these four cases.

It has been assumed by some that, as every good librarian desires to have these matters systematically regulated, regulation by a city civil service commission will be as good as any, and that a man who wishes to have a system of his own and keep it under his own control is unreasonable and foolish. A non-professional body, however, cannot, even with professional expert advice, satisfactorily regulate the employment of professionals for professional work. This point has been so often insisted upon and elaborated that those, who do not now appreciate its validity will never do so. Every good librarian will wish to create machinery to put the right man in the right place in his force, and to drop him out if he goes wrong; but it must be his own machinery, not that of someone else, and must be designed to aid him, not to hamper him.

My attention was drawn to the necessity of a more systematic plan of service in the New York Free Circulating Library on assuming charge in 1895. The library had been hampered by insufficiency of funds and had been obliged to supplement assistants of ability and experience with others who had been employed simply because they could be obtained at low salaries. Promotion, where it was distinctly in-

dicated, was for merit, ascertained simply by the librarian's opinion; and salary increases were made very largely for length of service. An effort was made at the outset to regulate admission to the force and advancement within it. The features of examination and of grades distinguished by letters were borrowed from the Boston Public Library. A department head, who had been giving private instruction, had by the board's permission placed some of her pupils in the library for practice work This seemed an excellent opportunity to train future assistants; so the private class was turned into a library training class and the pupils into apprentices, their teacher being retained as such and properly compensated. The library force was divided into three grades, A, B and C, to which a fourth, D was afterwards added. The first two were indicated by the fact that the library consisted of six coördinate branches, each with its librarian-in-charge and her first assistant. All the former were graded as A and the latter as B. Class A thus necessarily became limited in number, depending on the number of branches, and B would have been similarly limited if it had not been made to include also all the high-grade assistants—all capable of assignment at any time to the work of a deputy librarian of a branch. Class C was then a remainder class, including all other members of the library staff. It soon appeared, however, that the line of demarkation between those members of Class B who were first assistant librarians and those who were not was much more distinct than that between B and C. B was accordingly limited to first assistants; the remnant was called C, and the old C became D. The old feeling that seniority should be considered was deferred to by arranging for automatic increases of salary within the grades at speci-

fied intervals. Janitors and messengers remained quite outside this arrangement.

It was provided that no one should be promoted from grade to grade without the passage of an examination; but that passage simply placed the successful candidate on a list of eligibles, and promotion from this list was made by considering personal fitness, character of work and immediate conditions. Qualifications for the different grades differed, but in quantity and advancement, rather than in quality, all coming under the heads of literature, language, general information and library economy.

This plan was formulated in consultation with the library committee, and was adopted as part of the rules of the library by the board. The committee differed somewhat on the seniority increases within grades, which were finally retained, and considered it of great importance to emphasize work and personal fitness. Methods of including marks for these in the final standing of the candidate were considered, but the difficulty of doing so led to the adoption of the plan as stated.

It was decided to give every member of the staff the right to demand an examination for promotion on the expiration of three years' service in one grade, and to admit others by special order. Advancement proved to be necessarily so rapid, however, that no one who had any chance of passing the examination ever remained three years in a grade, and this clause proved practically inoperative.

Of course, many passed and were placed on the eligible list for promotion who had no chance of advancement for reasons connected with work or personality. This caused dissatisfaction which it was sought to mitigate by recognizing presence on the eligible list by increase of salary to the grade limit,

provided this had not been already attained. Even so, however, it continued to exist.

The alternative was considered of examining only those selected for promotion and of making promotion conditional on the passage of such examination, but was rejected, although a perfectly possible and logical plan. But objectionable in many ways as all examinations are, they foster a feeling that everyone is having a chance, and previous selection, no matter how good, is open to the same objection as the selection alone would be, without any test at all.

It would also have been possible to make the examination competitive, placing the names on the list in the order of passage and promoting in that order, or grading the names in order of seniority, as in most city systems. But both these plans are open to obvious objections, and I still think it best to form an eligible list whose names shall not be considered in any order at all, the appointing officer being quite free to make his choice among them.

The application of this system of grading to the staff, as it existed, involved discrimination at only one point—that separating Classes B and C, or as renamed later, C and D. The line was drawn partly on the basis of the salary list as it stood, and partly by duties, and there was little dissatisfaction.

I have said that this system was formally adopted by the board. This is not necessary, nor is it the best plan. A system of this kind is best regarded simply as an aid to the librarian in making recommendations for appointment or promotion. In making such recommendation, the librarian must, of course, satisfy himself that his candidates are fit, and it is proper that he should adopt any system that commends itself to him for ascertaining that they are so. The board is, of course, the final authority.

It could override any system that it might adopt, just as easily as it could go over the head of the librarian's recommendation; and it is better for its own dignity that a departure from the system should take the latter form, rather than the former.

I regard it as quite sufficient, therefore, when a librarian grades his staff, that he should simply report to his board that he is about to make certain dispositions and require certain tests to aid him in making proper recommendations for appointment and promotion, and that his recommendations in future will be guided by these arrangements. The authority of the board and its ability to reject his recommendations have not been touched, and its disposition to trust him and accept his advice will be surely increased as it sees that he is adopting plans to improve that advice and give it force.

This grading of the New York Free Circulating staff has been dwelt on at length, although very simple, because it formed the basis of the other gradings, now to be described.

The application of a similar system to the staff of the Brooklyn Public Library took place early in 1899, at a time when, owing to a crisis in the affairs of the library, it had temporarily ceased to do work. It had only four library assistants, and yet the probabilities were strongly in favor of an immediate and rapid expansion, such as actually did take place not long after. Expediency, therefore, pointed to the organization of the staff on the supposition that it would soon be of considerable size.

The grading was precisely similar to that just described, except that Classes C and D were combined and called Class C, and the letter D was used to designate members of the training class. The principal interest in the scheme as then adopted lies in

its relations with the city civil service. The New York Free Circulating Library was a private institution, charitable in its origin, but broadening rapidly out into real public work. It had no relations with the city, except to apply annually for its subsidy and receipt for the monthly instalments thereof as paid over. There could be no question therefore of city civil service jurisdiction. The case in Brooklyn was different. The members of the Board were appointed by the Mayor, and the library was recognized as a city institution, although exactly what this meant had not yet been definitely determined. The scheme of service was adopted at first on the supposition that the board was to be as free in the matter as though it had been an entirely independent body . The question might never have arisen, but was precipitated by the city auditor's holding up the payroll on the ground that it had not been certified by the municipal Civil Service Commission. The question went at once to the Corporation Counsel for an opinion, and after he had decided that the city civil service regulations covered the library force, there was a further dispute with the state Civil Service Commission, exacerbated by a difference in political complexion between the two bodies. This held up the payroll for some time, and did not tend to reconcile any member of the staff to its new status. Matters having been settled, the commission promptly certified the payroll as it stood, in order to terminate the embarrassing situation, and then ensued a series of conferences with the librarian on permanent grading. It was decided that the librarian and assistant librarian fell within the exempt class, and that other members of the staff could be divided into senior and junior assistants, the latter including only members of the training class until properly appointed to permanent positions. What-

ever grading the library might choose to make within the senior assistant class (A, B and C) was therefore its own affair, the commission taking cognizance of it only so far as it involved increase of salary. The point of conflict came at entrance to Class C, or on appointment to permanent position in the library. The commission at first insisted that it should make its own eligible list, graded in accordance with its own examinations, although it agreed to admit no others except members of the training class to such examinations. At least one examination of the kind was held, the questions evidently being written by some outside librarian on general principles, and with little reference to our needs and conditions. Ultimately, however, the commission agreed to let us hold the examinations and to accept our rating, although, when the eligible list had once been formed, we were bound by it rigidly. In regard to persons outside our graded force, such as janitors and messengers, we were held strictly to civil service rules, selecting our men from the first three on the list submitted to us by the commission. An unsatisfactory person could be summarily rejected after trial for a specified period, and as many such were on the list, there was rapid rotation in office in this part of the force. In the graded staff, also, although it might seem that the commission had almost abdicated its powers in our favor, we felt the restriction that bound us to select from the top of the list. Even though we had originally made the ratings, it often happened that for the particular vacancy in question the sixth name might be that of the best-qualified person, and we had the disagreeable alternative of taking one who was not our first choice, or of appointing on trial and rejecting until the proper name had been reached—a process much in vogue in city depart-

ments, but tiresome to the appointing authority and ignominious to those who were thus rejected and who might be better qualified than the person desired for another kind of position.

In 1901 the New York Free Circulating Library became the Circulation Department of the New York Public Library, under circumstances that gave it a separate governing body, responsible to the trustees of the Public Library, and a separate staff, whose organization was not necessarily the same as that of the reference staff. The annexed staff, of course, brought its own organization with it, and this, with some modifications, became that of the present Circulation Department. The principal changes were the limitation of Class C to three times the number of branch libraries and the almost total abolition of salary increases for length of service within grades. The former prevented unlimited promotion from D to C, and made necessary a selection from the waiting list to fill actual vacancies, and the latter, while not doing away with a difference of salaries in the same grade, made it possible to give the increases as a reward for good work. The designation of the grades by letters was objected to by some members of the board, on the ground that it meant nothing, so that alternative names were adopted for C, D and E, the two upper grades having already the names of librarian-in-charge and first assistant. Members of C were named second assistant librarians; D, assistants, and E, attendants.

When the Free Circulating Library grading was made, there were neither children's rooms nor children's librarians in New York, and very few anywhere. The former arose first and were served by persons assigned for the purpose, usually from Grade C. The organization, later, of a separate children's

department, with jurisdiction over all children's rooms, made it necessary to place children's librarians in a separate class; but that they might not feel "out of the running" for branch librarianships, they were allowed to take examinations and advance from one regular grade to another, in addition, if they so desired. Catalogers were still graded regularly, however, although these might have been easily treated in a similar way. The special nature of their work, however, was recognized by a variation in the examination. The test for the children's grade was not an examination, but a series of periods of practical work in selected branch libraries, with observation and report and a final thesis. Candidates were specially selected by the supervisor of children's work, and so jealously has entrance into this grade been guarded that even now not more than half of the forty or more assistants in charge of New York's children's rooms are members of it.

In later years a thesis also has formed part of the examination for Class A. This is written on an assigned subject, and the successful ones are sometimes, although not always, printed.

One of the difficulties connected with the grading in the Circulation Department of the New York Public library was the assignment to proper grades of the staffs of the different institutions that consolidated with that library from time to time. There were altogether about half a dozen of these, with staffs varying in number perhaps from five to forty or fifty persons. It was decided to leave the assignment entirely to the authorities of these libraries, who practically graded their staffs on a plan corresponding with ours before consolidation, so that there was no change of grade afterward. The responsibility was thus thrown upon bodies of men with whose authority

the new staffs were familiar and which they would be inclined to accept. The assignments were made with varying degrees of care and validity, but were, on the whole, just, and there was little complaint with them. Too low an assignment was corrected by the next examinations for promotion, and a person graded too high never at all events, rose any higher. The smoothness with which these consolidations took place, even sometimes against the will and with the dismal foreboding of the dispossessed authorities, and the rapidity with which the entire staff became homogeneous, both in feeling and in quality of work, are sufficient justification of this particular policy, which was typical of that of the library in regard to other features of these consolidations.

In the year 1910 it was decided to grade the staff of the St. Louis Public Library. The principal differences between the problem here and that in the cases that have been described depended on the fact that this was an old library, with a comparatively large staff, having traditions of its own and justly proud of its achievements and of its library reputation. There had even been a feeling, at some time in the past, on the part of some members of the board, that a graded staff was not a good thing, as it would hamper freedom of control. The staff, however, had reached such a size that some kind of classification appeared inevitable, and the proper method of handling it seemed to be that indicated above as preferable, namely, as purely an administrative matter under the librarian's control, to aid him in making recommendations for appointment, promotion and increase of salary. This was explained to the board, and there being no objection, a notice was at once inserted in *Staff Notes*, the medium of communication between the librarian and the staff, that the force

would be shortly divided into grades, "the object being to represent definitely the exact position occupied by each one, and to fix the maximum salary belonging to each grade." There was some additional preliminary explanation and a request for suggestions and opinions. After a lapse of about six months, during which the plan became familiar to all by discussion, both informal and in the weekly meetings of the heads of departments, the grading was announced by the publication in *Staff Notes* of the principles on which it had been made, with explanations in considerable detail. The names of those assigned to the different grades were not given, but each member of the staff was notified separately of his own grading, unless this was obvious from the published explanation, as in case of branch librarians. It was announced that the grading was not an act of the Board, but "simply a schedule expressing the formal manner in which . . . recommendations will hereafter be made to the board."

This scheme was more thoroughgoing than any of those previously noted, in that it provided a place and designation for everyone in the library's employ. The force was divided into three sections—regular grades, special grades and ungraded occupations. The former were classified practically as in New York; the special grades were made to include catalogers and children's librarians, with any special positions of enough importance to be placed there; the "ungraded occupations" were those of janitors and their assistants, messengers, elevator men, binders and other miscellaneous employees. In the regular grades A and B were limited, and while C and D were not formally so, it was announced that they would not be indefinitely increased. It was provided that those in special grades might qualify also for

regular grades and might also be transferred thereto if desired.

In assignment of members of the staff to grades, existing conditions were recognized as far as possible, with no immediate attempt to remedy faults that might exist therein. Statement was made that all persons who might consider themselves wrongly graded would have early opportunity to show their fitness for the grade above, either in the regular way or in some other, if it could be devised. It was stated that the qualifications that would gain the librarian's recommendation for promotion from grade to grade (which, it will be remembered, consists merely in an increase of salary, so far as the board takes cognizance thereof) would in general be of three kinds—educational, to be ascertained by certificate or diploma, or failing these, by examination; special, to be ascertained in some cases by examination, in others by mail, in others by certified experience; and personal, to be ascertained by personal knowledge.

In connection with the scheme, the training class was much extended in scope and its course broadened and made to cover an educational year.

Here, as in New York, the scheme is entirely distinct from the municipal civil service, but for a different reason. In New York the library is a private institution, occupying city property and doing public work by provision of a contract which does not provide for extension of the city civil-service rules over the library force; in St. Louis, the merit system has not been introduced at all among city employees. Should it be introduced in the future, and should it be decided that the members of the library staff are strictly employees of the city, we might have here the Brooklyn experience over again, as detailed above. For purely selfish reasons, therefore, the St. Louis

Public Library should be well satisfied with the *status quo*.

In concluding, it may be well to call attention again to the fact that such schemes as these are designed to aid an appointing body or officer, not to control him. They would be of little value to a municipality desiring to limit a political mayor's power for evil, or to a mayor wishing to keep his board of library trustees within bounds, or to a board anxious to curb its librarian's propensity to appoint personal favorites. Such a plan pre-supposes that appointment and promotion for the good of the service are desired, and it serves to bring this about so far as it may. A board, or a librarian, could depart from it or violate its provisions in a dozen ways. What, then, is the use of it? In a small staff, it has no uses. It would be as silly to grade such a staff and make rules for its promotion as it would be for a housekeeper with a cook and one maid to call the former Class A and the latter Class B, and draw up rules for their appointment and promotion. But as soon as the size of the staff exceeds that at which the officer in charge can know each member and her work with intimate personal knowledge, then something of the kind becomes imperative. The members of such a staff are better satisfied that they are being treated with uniform justice, and that merit is properly recognized, if it is done in some systematic way like this, and the officer on whose recommendation appointments and promotions are made runs much less risk of making mistakes. Every librarian should, I believe, examine himself to make sure that his present scheme of service, whatever it may be, is sufficient for these purposes and adapted to secure their attainment smoothly and satisfactorily.

EFFICIENCY RECORDS IN LIBRARIES

In the foregoing article the present writer gave the result of his experience in formulating and establishing systems of service in four large libraries, and, incidentally, stated his conclusion that such systems should always remain in the control of the library authorities.

While the plans therein described work satisfactorily from an inside standpoint, they are defective in one particular—that of complete record. This is most important in case of investigation by competent authority. While direct control of a library service system by an outside body, such as a municipal or other civil service board, is objectionable, there can certainly be no objection to the requirement, by municipal charter or state law, that the library service be organized and operated on the merit system, which requirement presupposes occasional inquiry to ascertain whether, and in what degree and form, this is the case. Now, in the event of such investigation, it will usually be easy to produce the records of examinations, with marked papers, tabulated marks, and the action based thereon. When it comes to personality and efficiency, such records are not easy to get. Even where libraries assign marks in these subjects and combine them with the results of the written tests to obtain a final mark on which promotion is based, there is nothing to show how the marks were obtained, and the investigating authority might not unnaturally conclude that here was an opportunity to nullify the merit system. Evidently all data

on which appointment or promotion is based should be matters of record, otherwise a perfectly well-ordered merit system cannot be demonstrated to be such to one who has a right to know; and, of course, in the last analysis, every citizen has this right in the case of a public institution.

What appeared to be needed was some regular report on the efficiency of every employee, which should be taken into account in assigning marks or in some other way, in making promotions, made in such permanent form that it could be filed as a record. Such reports are, of course, constantly made orally and acted upon, without any record being preserved. They are occasionally made in recordable form, perhaps most often in the case of apprentices or members of training classes. In some cases derelictions or unfavorable reports alone have been recorded, but a complete report on personality and work made regularly and filed permanently is a thing that has not come under my observation, although, of course, it may exist.

Having decided to adopt some such form of report in the St. Louis Public Library, the librarian laid the matter before the weekly conference of department heads and branch librarians. Had the question been the advisability of the adoption of such a form, the sentiment of the meeting would probably have been against it, but the announcement was simply that the librarian had decided to require regularly thereafter, in shape suitable for filing, information regarding the efficiency of assistants that had hitherto been received irregularly and by word of mouth. A staff committee was appointed to draft a form of report, and the reports of progress of this committee, with the incidental discussions and conferences, occupied nearly a year, during which time

everyone on the staff became thoroughly familiar with the plan and either agreed with the librarian regarding its advisability or had some reasonable and well-considered ground of opposition.

The librarian had in mind a short form, containing a few important data. The committee brought in a long one—somewhat longer than that finally adopted, which is given below. Their reason, as stated, was that it is easier to answer a large number of questions that require hardly more than the words "yes" and "no" in reply than a few, each of which calls for the writing of an essay, however brief. This reason appealed to all and finally prevailed. It means practically the presentation of the information required, ready-made, and its adoption or rejection by the person making the report. Discussion in the meeting was chiefly on the more personal items of information, such as those about neatness of dress, etc.; also about others whose propriety or clearness was questioned, such as that regarding loyalty to the library. Some of these were finally stricken out, but most were retained. It was also noted that in many cases the information asked for could not ordinarily be obtained. A department head, for instance, may be intimate enough with one of her assistants to know whether she has a real appreciation for literature, but in most instances this would not be the case. Many such questions were retained on the ground that answers, if possible, would be of value, and, if not, could simply be omitted.

After the forms had thus been put into shape they were duplicated and a copy was given to each department head, with instructions to show it to all her assistants, discuss it with them and report at the next meeting. The reports showed that the reception of the form had depended chiefly on the de-

partment head, either through manner of presentation or through personal influence. In some departments the plan seemed to be viewed with equanimity, while in others there was a considerable amount of suspicion, distrust and dislike of the whole scheme. It was next announced that anyone on the staff desiring to discuss the matter with librarian would be given an opportunity to do so at a specified meeting. This was well attended, and it appeared that much of the feeling was due to misunderstanding. It was explained that no new method of making promotions was contemplated, and that personality and efficiency would be taken into account neither more nor less than before, but that the reports from which the librarian derived his information on these points would be required in writing, thus safeguarding both the appointing officer and the appointees. There seemed to be a strong feeling on the part of some that personal feeling might actuate some department head to make a false report, and that while, of course, such report might be made even more effectively if rendered orally, it would be a pity to have it permanently on record. There was no answer to this except that the likelihood of such a misleading report would probably become known to the librarian, who could reject or modify it.

In due course of time, a sufficient number of blanks were distributed, filled and handed in. They were then discussed again at a meeting, and questions that had come up in the practical rendition of the reports were brought up and settled. A filled report regarding the work of every classified assistant in this library is now on file in the librarian's office.

The conditions under which these reports are made and held are as follows:

Every question must be answered or the reason for not doing so must be stated.

The reports are to be made out regularly on the first of each year, or oftener at the librarian's request. Each is accessible only to the librarian, to the reporting officer and to the assistant reported on, except when a transfer is to be made, when the head of the department to which the assistant is to be transferred may also consult the record.

Since the reports were made out only about half a dozen assistants have requested to be shown their records. Some others were allowed to see them before they were handed in. Such excitement as there was regarding the matter has now abated, and the matter has been relegated to its proper plane in the scheme of library things. This is due, probably, very largely to the plan of conducting the whole matter on a free and open basis, in consultation with the staff at every point, and also to the length of time that was allowed to elapse between steps. Publicity and deliberation are the two necessary things in a procedure of this kind, and both are commended to librarians wishing to adopt this kind of record.

There is no doubt in my mind that some efficiency record is necessary and valuable, and that a full record, including the usual high percentage of good things with the possible proportion of bad ones, is preferable to a mere blacklist, on which only the bad is recorded.

The blank, as finally adopted, is reproduced herewith.

ST. LOUIS PUBLIC LIBRARY

RECORD OF EFFICIENCY

Name
(Inverted, in full)
Branch or Department.
Length of service in dept. or branch.
Present grade of assistant.
Entered the library.

A. Personal qualities.
   1. Physically strong enough for the work?
      How much time lost while in department and why?
   2. Knowledge of books.
      Improving in this?
   3. All around information?
   4. Appreciation for real literature.
   5. Resourceful? Systematic?
   6. Self-possessed in a rush or emergency?
   7. Executive ability? Decision?
   8. Accurate? Quick? Adaptable?
   9. Industrious? Careless?
   10. Obliging to fellow-workers?
   11. Punctual? Times tardy? Excusable?
   12. Forgetful? Inclined to gossip?
   13. Neat and appropriate in dress?

B. Relations with the public.
   1. Uniformly courteous? Dignified?
   2. Inclined to entertain personal visitors?
   3. Effective in work with adults?
   4. Effective in work with children?

C. Grade as excellent, good, fair, or poor.
   1. Library hand.
   2. Printing.
   3. Typewriting.
   4. Shorthand.

D. Did the assistant improve while with you?
   In what way?
   In what did she fall short?

E. If the assistant had weak points, did you call her attention to them?

F. What did you especially like about the assistant?

G. Do you consider the assistant fitted or unfitted by personality, education and practical efficiency to work in any one of the following departments? Grade her work as excellent, good, fair or poor, stating also length of service at each kind of work.
   1. An all-around branch assistant in this library?
   2. A children's librarian?
   3. A reference department assistant?
   4. A catalog department assistant?
   5. A desk assistant?
   6. A clerical assistant?
   7. An assistant in other lines? (specify)
   If you do not consider the assistant so fitted, give particular reasons.

H. Is the assistant loyal to the library?

I. Has the assistant enthusiasm in her work?

J. Would you be satisfied to have the assistant in your (Branch) (Dept.), not considering the fact that you might prefer some one else?

L. Remarks.

Signature

Date Title

MAL-EMPLOYMENT IN THE LIBRARY*

Students of the labor problem have given a vast amount of attention to the unemployed, but comparatively little to the mal-employed. It troubles them —and very properly—that there should be large numbers of persons who are doing no work, who are contributing nothing toward the operation of the world's machinery; they do not seem to be so greatly bothered that there are persons hard at work to no purpose or with evil result—whose efforts either do not help the world along or actually impede it or hold it back. Serious as is the case of those who are not employed at all, it is as nothing compared with those who are employed badly.

One reason for this neglect—which is at the same time a reason why it should no longer exist—is that the burden of unemployment bears most conspicuously on the individual, while that of mal-employment is predominantly civic. It is true that unemployment works civic injury, and that mal-employment, especially if it be criminal, is recognized at once as a possible harm to the individual. But what I mean is that the unemployed person, unless he is one of the idle rich, is greatly concerned about his lack of employment, which touches his pocket directly. He does all that he can to get back into the ranks of the employed, but once there it does not occur to him to ask whether what he is doing benefits society, or is of no value to it, or actually harms it. Even if he does so inquire, he is not likely to give up a job that pays him well simply because what he

* Read before the Iowa Library Association.

is doing is injurious to the world's progress. The injury done is social and civic and we must look to increased social and civic consciousness for its abatement.

I owe this word *mal-employment,* in its contrasted use with *unemployment,* to William Kent, a member of Congress from the city of Chicago. In a recent interview, Mr. Kent gives it as his opinion that the sin of the day is waste—the expenditure of effort for naught or for positive ill. Of course, when we get down to details there is difficulty or even impossibility in deciding whether or not a given man is mal-employed—we may leave out of consideration here all persons engaged in criminal occupations. For instance, Mr. Kent considers that the small army of men engaged in the manufacture of champagne are all mal-employed. Whether we agree with him or not depends somewhat on our predispositions and our points of view. Many parents, in earlier days, thought that when children were at play they were mal-employed; most persons now regard this form of employment as necessary and beneficial, although Dr. Boris Sidis thinks that the same interest now employed in aimless play may be used to carry the child onward in the path of individual progress and development. How about the vast number of persons occupied in amusing or trying to amuse the public—employes of theatres, recreation parks, and so on? Many are well employed; some are doubtless mal-employed. Among persons that we should all agree are mal-employed are all those writing books or plays that are morally harmful, as well as those concerned in publishing such books or producing such plays, and, for the moment, all who are reading or witnessing them; persons engaged in manufacturing or distributing useless or harmful products; all who do

work of any kind so badly that inconvenience or harm results; unnecessary middlemen whose intervention in the process of distribution only impedes it and adds to its expense. Anyone may add to the list by taking thought a little. If all these mal-employed persons should suddenly lose their positions the result would be beneficial to society, even if society had to support them in idleness; if they should all turn their attention from mal-employment to beneficial uses, how incalculably great a blessing they would bestow upon mankind! It is every man's business, it seems to me, to inquire whether he is well employed or mal-employed, and if the occupation in which he is engaged is generally beneficial to society, then whether all those under his orders are well employed in carrying out its purpose.

Let us, as librarians, take up this civic task for a few moments. And first, let us not hastily conclude that we are necessarily well employed simply because we are librarians. A library may do harm; I have personally known of harm done by libraries. A group can be no better than its constituents; a collection of harmful books is assuredly itself harmful. More, a chain is no stronger than its weakest link; a fleet is no faster than its slowest ship; and we may almost say that a library is no better than its worst book. And we must not forget that a book may be bad in three ways: it may give incorrect information, teach what is morally wrong, or use language that is unfitting. It may be necessary that a library should contain any or all of these, but if they give it its atmosphere and control its influence as an educational institution, even unwittingly, it is anti-social and those who administer it are mal-employed. I have in mind a pseudo-scientific book for children that abounds in misstatements combined with beautiful illustrations;

a book of travel full of ludicrous misinformation; a work intended to teach Italians English, whose English is screamingly funny. The library assistant who hands one of these to a reader is mal-employed. I can make a list (and so can you) of books that teach, directly or by implication, that what is universally acknowledged to be wrong is right—at least under certain circumstances; that theft is smart and that swindling is unobjectionable. The library assistant who circulates these is mal-employed. All of us can easily also place our hands on books whose only fault is that their language is objectionable—incorrect, silly or vulgar. They may be otherwise unobjectionable, yet I venture to say that the distribution of these books is also mal-employment. How about the librarian who administers such a library, and the staff who assist him? They are all mal-employed. No matter how well and how conscientiously the cataloguer may perform her task, no matter how clean the janitor may keep the front steps, they are only aiding to keep up an institution that disseminates falsehood, teaches unrighteousness, encourages vulgarity; and they are all mal-employed. This is what I mean when I say that a library may be no better than its worst book. If its output is bad, all exertion to accomplish that output is also bad. And as for the output itself, it may be that the good done by a thousand good books may not outweigh the ill done by a few bad ones.

A person is always mal-employed when he is leaving a more important thing undone, to do a less important one. The degree of mal-employment in this case is measured, of course, by the difference in value between the two things. Mr. E. L. Pearson, in one of his library articles in the *Boston Transcript*, calls attention to what he names "side-shows" in libraries, and asserts that the chief business of a library, the

proper care and distribution of books, is often neglected that other things may be attended to, and that money needed for books is often diverted to these other uses. This is undoubtedly true in many cases, and in so far as it is true some librarians and library assistants are mal-employed. The scope of library work has broadened out enormously of late and libraries are doing all sorts of things that are subsidiary to their main work—things that will make that work easier and more effective. This is as it should be, provided that these numerous tails do not wag the dog. To take an extreme instance we will assume that a small library is in great need of books and that a small gift of money, instead of being expended for these is put into material for picture bulletins. We should have no difficulty in concluding that the person who makes the bulletins is mal-employed; and in so doing we should not be condemning picture bulletins at all or saying that money spent for them is wasted. Take again a case specially noted by Mr. Pearson, which is bothering the heads of some of our library trustees at this moment—the acceptance and preservation of full sets of the printed catalogue cards of the Library of Congress. There can be no doubt of the value of such depository sets to certain libraries, and as they are given free of charge the only expense connected with them is the cost of an assistant's time in filing them, amounting perhaps to an hour or two a day, and that of cabinets in which to keep them. Whether this cost is far outweighed by the usefulness of the collection to the library and its patrons, or whether that usefulness is practically *nil*, making the outlay wasteful, no matter how small it may be, must be answered by each library for itself. In some cases, labor expended on the filing of L. C. cards is undoubtedly mal-employment.

Certain kinds of work which were either not mal-

employment when they were adopted, or were not recognized as such, have become so by reason of a change, either in the conditions of the work itself or in the way in which it is regarded by those who are doing it and by the public that benefits by it.

Take, for instance, labor performed under an age-limit rule for children, such as nearly all libraries once possessed, and such as is still enforced in some places. If it is true that the library ought not to be used by children below a specified age, work done in ascertaining their ages and in excluding those barred out by the rule is necessary and valuable. If this is not true; if the exclusion of such children may be actually harmful to the community, it follows that all such work is the most flagrant kind of mal-employment.

But there may also be mal-employment in the course of work of undoubted advantage to the library and its public. If in the course of such work something is done that sets it back instead of helping it on, or that injures the library in some other way more than it helps by what it directly effects, labor expended on that thing is mal-employment. This is a more fundamental and elementary thing than lack of efficiency. If an assistant is cataloguing books well, but much more slowly than she ought, she is not efficiently employed, but neither is she mal-employed, for she is doing nothing that directly injures the work. If she were to stop, the library would be injured, not benefited. But if she is making egregious blunders in her work, causing undue labor in revision or making the catalogue confused or misleading in case her cards should get into it, it might be better for the library if she were to stop work, and she is surely mal-employed.

The public is apt to generalize from insufficient

data. The user who is treated rudely or sullenly at the desk just once does not say, "I will make a record of this and of my subsequent experiences and see whether it is a usual thing or an abnormal one." Not at all. He or she at once reports in conversation that the public library assistants are continuously rude and disagreeable, and the machinery is forthwith set in motion that makes or mars reputation. We may chafe at this; we may try to disregard it, but in the end we shall have to accept it as a fact of human nature. The public institution that wants to acquire that valuable asset, reputation, whether it is a reputation for kindliness, for helpfulness, for common sense, for scholarly acquirements, will have to make up its mind to be kind, helpful, sensible, and scholarly, not fifty per cent or seventy-five per cent of the time, but one hundred per cent of the time.

But entirely apart from such serious intervals of mal-employment as this, is it not probable that all of us are mal-employed for some little part of our time? Is it not probable, in other words, that our work would be improved if we should omit certain parts of it and do nothing at all instead? It is certain, for one thing, that no one could work continuously, day and night, without serious or fatal mal-employment. That is the reason why our working hours are limited to seven or eight in the twenty-four. Doubtless some workers are over worked and thus mal-employed in their hours of overwork—the sleepy railroad engineer, for instance, who misses a signal and sends a hundred passengers to eternity. We are doubtless free in the library from just this kind of mal-employment, except so far as it is forced upon us by assistants who work or play too strenuously outside of working hours. To go back to the assistant who is cross or careless for an hour every day; it is quite possible that she is

in no condition for working during that hour; and this is not because the library hours of work are too long, but because she does not take needed rest outside of those hours. Sometimes this cannot be helped; often it is distinctly the worker's fault, and it is surely putting the library in a false position to make it overwork its staff to their detriment and its own, just because the assistant puts in her best and freshest hours in work, or more often in amusement, outside the library.

Let me pause here to say that the reason we take vacations is to avoid the chance of this kind of mal-employment. The theory of the vacation is widely misunderstood. Some take it to be a period of amusement granted for services rendered. "I think I have earned a vacation," they say. Others look upon it as play-time wrung from an unwilling employer—the more they can get the better off they are. Few realize that it is, or ought to be, simply an incident in the year's work, an assignment to special duty, without which mal-employment would be more apt to result.

The mal-employed intervals of an otherwise valuable worker are often due to ignorance of conditions or sheer inability to meet them. In an interesting study of bricklaying one of the modern school of efficiency engineers found that most bricklayers kept their bricks too far from the point on the wall where they were to be laid, and that a long and wasteful carrying movement resulted. If the time occupied by this lost motion could have been eliminated and simply given to resting, even without doing any work, good would have resulted; these periods were hence intervals of mal-employment. The engineer eliminated them easily and simply by bringing the pile of bricks within a few inches of the wall. It is easy to

say, "Why, of course, any one would think of that!" Only no one ever did think of it. A large proportion of the most valuable inventions and discoveries have been of this character. Some one has remarked that in the earliest stage of an invention people say, "It won't work;" later they say, "It may work, but it won't be of any use." Finally; when it is usefully running, they say, "What of it? Everybody has always known about it!" We don't do these obvious things because they are elements in a series of acts that have grown to be habitual. We take care of them subconsciously. Also, they take up so little time individually that at first thought it seems foolish to try to improve or eliminate them. Suppose one does a useless, or even an injurious thing that lasts but three seconds? If he does it just once and then stops, it would doubtless be folly to change it. If, however, like the bricklayer's useless and tiresome motions, it is repeated hundreds and thousands of times, the matter stands on quite a different footing. It is probable that all of us are habitually doing certain things in ways that involve, without our realizing it, elements of this kind, either mechanical or mental. Many things that we are doing by laborious repetition, wearying ourselves and using up valuable material, might be made to "do themselves" if we only knew how to utilize tendencies and forces that are all about us, unsuspected. One of the forces, for instance, is the desire of every person to do that which will give him pleasure. If the things we want done can be done in accordance with that desire, we can get others to do them for us. The classical example of the boys who whitewashed Tom Sawyer's fence for him will occur to all. There is deep philosophy in this. I have known librarians to exhaust themselves by trying to get newspapers to publish what newspapers never would publish, while the reporters besiege

others for items which they know will be just what they want. The rules of some libraries—both those for their public and those for their own assistants—all seem to run up hill—to "rub everyone the wrong way," while those of others seem to get themselves obeyed without any trouble .

Sometimes the substitution of a mechanical appliance for brain-work is what we want. What, for instance, is the use of tiring one's brain and impairing its usefulness for other needed work by forcing it to perform such a mechanical operation as adding a column of figures? Every library that can afford to own an adding machine ought to have one. The ones that can not afford it usually do not need it.

While we are discussing the mal-employment that does its harm by tiring out the worker, physically or mentally, and making him unfit for other work, we must not neglect to say a word about unnecessary talk. Nothing is so tiring to the brain as talk. I sometimes think that if we were all forced to do our work in silence we would get along more rapidly even if we had to communicate with each other in writing.

If a man were in charge of a piece of complicated machinery, and if he feared that something had got into it to clog it, while his knowledge of its elementary parts was still so slight that he could not tell which particular bit in all the moving mass was helping it on and which was hindering it, what would he do? He could remove the pieces, one by one, and watch the effect. If the machine refused to run without a certain piece, he would conclude that it was an absolutely necessary part; if it still ran, though with difficulty, he would conclude that the part, though not necessary, still promoted efficient operation; if removal resulted in no change at all, the piece was evidently either an unnecessary part, or an alien piece

not so placed as to interfere with action. If the machine worked decidedly better after removal, the removed element must have been a clog—was, in fact, mal-employed.

How many of us feel like submitting to this test? If you should stop your work, would the library machine run along quite as usual? Or would it limp? Or would it refuse to run at all? Or would it—O distasteful thought!—would it jump ahead and function with greater speed and smoothness?

I believe in vacations; and yet I rather like to feel that the absence of an assistant on vacation makes a difference. And if every one in her department looks forward with fond expectation to her return and greets her with looks of satisfaction and sighs of relief, I cannot help feeling that she is a more integral part of the library machinery than if her return were generally regarded with indifference or were dreaded as a sort of calamity. When every one feels that she can work much better when Miss Blank is away, I am forced to inquire whether in truth Miss Blank is not a clog in the wheels instead of a cog, and whether a permanent vacation would not be the proper thing for her.

And how about your library as a whole? Suppose it should be leveled by a tornado, or swallowed up by an earthquake, or swept away by a flood? What effect would this have on the life of your town? Would the passer-by point to the ruins, or to the hole in the ground where once your library stood, with the same kind and amount of interest that he would show when viewing the stump of an old tree or the fragments of a blasted boulder? Or would every man, woman and child feel the loss? Would the teachers seek in vain for aid, the merchants for information, the workmen for data of use to them in their daily tasks?

In other words, is your library of such definite use in the community that it would feel your loss as it would that of a school house, a church, the railroad station, the principal retail store? Or would its loss affect that community only like the destruction of the monument on the green, or the fence around Deacon Jones' pasture?

If we are to make the library a vital influence in the community we must so conduct it that its loss would be felt as a calamity—that it could be spared no more than the postoffice could be spared, or the doctor, or the school. And we must do our best so to carry on every part of its work, every element that goes to make up its service to the public, that this part or element is contributing toward that service and not injuring it or delaying it. It is better for the community that we should be unemployed than mal-employed, and if the community should ever find out that we are the latter, we may be assured that unemployment will shortly be our condition, whether we like it or not.

COST OF ADMINISTRATION*

The possibility of deducing a general method for calculating the probable cost of operation of a library.

The problem of ascertaining how the cost of administration of a library is related to the various conditions and factors that affect it is the problem of finding a formula in which, by simple substitution of numbers representing or corresponding to these conditions, a reasonable or approximate cost may be obtained. The data obtainable are the conditions and actual cost in a limited number of cases. The obstacles are the difficulty of stating certain of the conditions numerically and the difficulty of deciding on the form of the formula, which must be done in advance.

We must first agree, of course, that the legitimate cost of administration of a library should bear some relation to its conditions of work. Probably no one would quarrel with this, but the first thought of one who considers the subject is generally that a large number of the conditions could, by their very nature, not be susceptible of numerical statement. Such factors as size of circulation, number of cardholders, size of building, and so on, may be stated directly in figures, and many such influence the cost of administration; but how, for instance, shall be stated numerically the character of the locality—whether foreign or native-born, wealthy or poor, etc., which also indubitably affects the cost? In this particular case this factor exerts its influence through others that

* Report to the American Library Institute.

may be numerically stated. So far as it necessitates purchase of foreign books, a foreign population acts to increase cost; so far as the demand for certain classes of books is concerned, cost might be increased or decreased; but size of book collections and circulation are both numerically determinable. It is possible that all conditions which would seem at first sight not to be numerical might reduce in this way, to various numerical factors. Regarding the form of the function to be used for the formula, mathematicians tell me that its determination might prove a great obstacle. Personally, it seems to me that it is probably "linear," that is, involving only the first powers of the quantities concerned, never their squares, cubes, etc. Thus, all other things being equal, increase of book collection increase of circulation, increase of staff, etc., would approximately mean increase of cost in direct proportion; or, at any rate, not in any way involving powers above the first. I should try at the outset therefore, a simple linear formula, such as

Ax plus By plus Cz plus Du. . . . . equals R in which x might be circulation, y number of books, z number in the staff, u cubic feet in the building, and so on. It would then be required to find values for A, B, C, D, etc. This would require, of course, as many equations as there are of these coefficients. To get each equation we select a library that we are willing to accept as being conservatively and properly operated, and substitute for x, y, etc., its reported circulation, number of books, and so on, putting in place of R its total cost of administration. Solution of this system of equations gives the coefficients, A, B, C, etc., and furnishes the working formula required. Thereafter when we wish to see whether a library is run as conservatively as the typical ones se-

lected, its statistics would be used to substitute for x, y, z, etc., and the value of R thus obtained would be compared with the actual cost.

The labor of reducing the system of equations would depend on their number, which must equal that of the conditions. This would doubtless be great —possibly twenty or twenty-five, but the work amounts simply to doing a great deal of figuring.

I believe that this thing is worth trying, and I intend to try it myself as soon as I can secure the necessary help in doing the work of figuring, which in any case would not be nearly as great as that done to calculate a comet's orbit. Physicists and astronomers are daily doing work of this kind, and doing it, too, on subjects regarding which there is quite as much reason to doubt the applicability of the method as in the present case. Why not try it? It admits of satisfactory "proving," for if applied to two groups of libraries with absurdly different results, it would at once be shown to be faulty as so applied.

I believe that we librarians use the experimental method too infrequently. When it is proposed to make some change or other, I constantly hear the objection, "That wouldn't result at all as you expect; it would do so-and-so." But why not try it? Try it and see what happens. That is the only real test. Of course, if trying will cost a large sum, or involve some serious risk, we must count the cost, but in nine cases out of ten nothing is involved but a little extra work.

In this case we are trying our experiments daily —we can't help it. We have libraries running under all kinds of conditions and we have statistical reports of those conditions and of the resulting cost. It is surely worth while to see if we can not connect these costs and these conditions in some useful way.

I venture to close with a parable. At a national meeting of civil engineers there was a discussion of the advisability—and possibility—of ascertaining the exact distance between New York and Chicago. In the course of the discussion it appeared that numerous measurements had already been made for various purposes by different parties and under divers conditions. No two of the results agreed precisely. It was suggested by a speaker that some method of combining the results might be found so as to arrive at a practical working estimate of the distance. Objection was at once made by various members. To many the very idea of such a proposal seemed a bit of pleasantry, and they greeted it with smiles. One speaker poked fun at the idea of treating so practical a question by abstract mathematical methods. Another pointed out that the measurements had been made with various objects in view; some for railroad purposes, others by government topographers; that instruments of varying makes had been employed and that the surveyors possessed differing grades of ability. He did not see, therefore, how there was any possibility of taking all these into account. Still another thought that the best way to get at the real distance was to send out a questionnaire to persons who had traveled from New York to Chicago and find out their opinions.

It seemed to be the consensus of belief that we should never ascertain the exact distance from New York to Chicago, and that it was extremely doubtful whether there really was any such distance. Probably it varied from time to time, which would account for the varying measurements.

Is it conceivable that engineers would ever talk in this way? It is not.

But we have all heard librarians do so. Why?

LIBRARY CIRCULATION AT LONG RANGE [1]

Is there still a place for the delivery station in the scheme of distribution adopted by libraries, large or small? This question is pertinent not so much because the use of the delivery station is being discontinued, but because of a general feeling that any system of book distribution that does not admit of seeing and handling the books is inferior to a system in which this is possible.

It will thus be noted that the question of the delivery station pure and simple, as opposed to the deposit station and the branch—a question once hotly debated—is at bottom simply that of the closed shelf versus the open shelf. The branch has won out as against the delivery station, and the open as against the closed shelf. It will also be noted, however, that none but small libraries find it good policy to place all their books on open shelves. There is and always will be a use for the closed shelf in its place, and the larger the library the more obvious does that place become.

Now circulation through a delivery station is nothing but long-distance closed-shelf issue—circulation in which the distance between charging-desk and stack has been greatly multiplied. And a legitimate reason for closed-shelf issue of this kind is that it is carried on under conditions where open-shelf issue is impossible—about the only excuse for the closed shelf in any case. Now no matter how many books may be in branches or in deposit stations, it is obviously impossible for the whole central stock to

be at any one of them, still less to be at all of them at the same time. And there are cases where it is impracticable to use any deposit at all, while delivery from the central library is feasible and reasonably satisfactory. There will always continue to be, therefore, some circulation from a distant reservoir of books that cannot be seen and handled by the reader for purposes of selection.

Under these circumstances it is interesting to inquire whether this type of service has any good points to offset its obvious disadvantages; and it is consoling to find that there are such—not enough to cause us to select an unsupported delivery station deliberately where a deposit or a branch would be possible, but enough to satisfy us that a delivery station is worth while if we can use nothing better and to induce us to lay stress, if we can, on the particular features that make it satisfactory.

For myself, after three years in a library with a large station system, following an experience in institutions where there was nothing of the kind, I may say that it has gratified and surprised me to find that personal contact between librarian and reader is possible in such a system, to almost the same extent as in an open-shelf library, although the contact is of quite a different quality. The quality of the contact is related to that possible with the open-shelf precisely as mental contact by letter writing is always related to that by conversation. It is superior, if anything, to that usually obtained in short-distance closed-shelf circulation, although possibly not to that obtainable under ideal conditions.

The establishment of more or less personal relations of confidence between library assistant and reader takes longer and is less complete when the sole intermediary is written language. It is always

harder and requires more time to become intimate by letter than by personal intercourse. In the former case the contact is purely mental, in the latter it is affected by personal appearance and conduct, by facial expression and manner. All this is one of the chief factors in the success of the open shelf. But the advantages are not all on the side of the direct personal contact, as the correspondence schools have been astute enough to find out. In the first place, *litera scripta manet;* one may read the same written communication several times, whereas the same spoken communication is of and for the moment. Then the very fact that the written message is purely intellectual and has no physical accompaniments may lend force to its intellectual appeal, when that appeal has once gained a foothold. When this is the case the writer may take his time and may plan his campaign of influence more carefully than the speaker. The effect of trivial circumstances, of unfavorable personal elements, of momentary moods, is obviated.

It may be, then, that if personal relations between librarian and reader can be set up through the written word, there may be something of this kind even in long-distance, closed-shelf circulation. This relation may be lacking, even when the circulation is at short range. It is usually lacking at the closed-shelf delivery desk, necessarily so in a rush, although at quieter times there is no good reason why it should not exist. I know that it sometimes does exist under these conditions, though a counter between two human beings, whether in a store, an office or a library, is not conducive to relations of confidence. It may even be lacking in the open-shelf room, when assistants on floor duty have not the proper spirit and a due conception of their own responsibilities and opportunities.

It may exist at long range. But does it? I can answer for only one library; but I have no reason to believe that our experience is by any means exceptional. Here are some instances, reported at my request from our own Station Department by Miss Elsie Miller, the department chief:

"(1) A short time ago one of the patrons of Station 27 sent in a slip asking to have his book renewed, and requested that we send him information on peace conferences. The latter was duly sent, but through some error the renewal was overlooked. Consequently six days later an overdue postal was mailed. This gentleman is always quite prompt in returning his books, and evidently had never before received a notice. So he was most perturbed, and wrote us a very long letter explaining the mistake. He said that he felt that the librarian should know that he was not at fault, had not broken the rules, and had a clear record. But in imparting this fact to the librarian, he wanted it understood that the assistant committing the error should not in any way be punished for it, because she had helped him greatly in his work, by sending the very facts on peace conferences that he was looking for. He asked that the assistant be praised for her good work rather than blamed for her error.

"(2) Celia R——, whom we have never seen but all feel well acquainted with, tried in vain for some time to borrow a certain little volume of Eskimo stories, but succeeded only in getting substitutes. About the middle of December she sent in with her card the following request: 'Please give me "Eskimo stories," because it is Christmas and you never send the right book.'

"(3) The cards of Mr. and Mrs. M——, of Staton 54, come in with a slip, 'Please send a novel.' We

know that the books must be 7-day adventure stories, and must have publishers' binding and an interesting frontispiece or they will come back to us on the next delivery unread.

" (4) At least one of the S—— family's cards is reported lost each week. We immediately recognize Mrs. S——'s voice when she telephones, and ask whether it is Ralph's or Walter's card that is missing this time. In a tone of despair she probably says, 'No; it is Morris's.' We promise to look the matter up thoroughly. Then we do no more about it. After two days we call up and tell her we are very sorry we have been unable to trace the card. 'Oh, we've found it here at home; thank you so much for your trouble,' she answers. 'And, by the way, we have not been able to find Nicholas' card all day.' So we look up Nicholas' card in the same way. No S—— card was ever known to be lost outside of the S—— household.

" (5) C39 of Station 6 has this note clipped to her readers' index: 'Give overdue notices to Stations Department.' We hold her notices a few days to give the books a chance to come in, because she uses a biweekly station. Each time that she receives an overdue notice, it costs her ten cents carfare to come to the library to investigate, and it costs the library a half hour of an assistant's time to pacify her. Our new method works beautifully, and both library and reader find it economical.

" (6) An old gentleman of Station 15 (at least we have pictured him as old, for it is a trembling hand that writes the titles) for a long time sent in a long list of German novels which we marked, 'Not in catalog.' We were out of printed German lists at the time, so selected a good German novel and sent it to him. It was immediately returned. We tried again

—in vain. Then again! We sent him everything that the average German finds intensely interesting. But the books always came back to us on the next delivery. One day we substituted 'Im Busch,' by Gerstaecker. He kept it two weeks, and then his card came in with a list of Gerstaecker novels, copied from the title-page of "Im Busch." He read all our Gerstaecker books and then wanted more. We wrote him that he had read all the books of this author and again substituted. Then a fresh list of Gerstaecker came in, and now he is reading all those books a second time.

"(7) One of the station men watches our substitutions and looks over them to get ideas for his own reading. Once when we had substituted Leroux's 'Mystery of the yellow room' the station man ordered a copy of that book for himself, and finding it interesting read all the Leroux books in the library.

"(8) Here is a letter from a youthful station patron:

"'Please send me the III Grade, The golden goose book! Please do. Kisses.

XXX.'"

These incidents, which of course might be multiplied indefinitely, show at least that the service rendered by a delivery station is not, or at any rate need not be, a mere mechanical sending of books in answer to a written demand.

So much for the element of personal contact and influence. Next let us consider for a moment that of actual contact with the books from which selection can be made. This of course does not take place in any closed-shelf system—least of all in one at long range. But in certain cases this contact is of no special advantage. In particular, if a reader wants one

definite book and no other, he may get it as surely, or be informed as reliably that he cannot get it, and why, at a delivery station as at a set of open shelves. The only drawback in "long-range" work is that the user must wait longer before he can get his book, provided it is on the shelves. Against this wait must be set the time and cost of a personal visit to the distant library building.

Of the "browsing" contact there can be none, of course. This seems a more serious matter to me than it would be to those who deprecate "browsing," or at any rate discourage it. But there is no question that the alternative between library and delivery station, if squarely presented, should always be answered by choosing the library. Here the alternative is between the delivery station and no use at all. This brings up another point:

May it not be, in some cases, that we really are offering the reader an alternative between delivery station and library and that through indolence he takes the former? Doubtless this is often the case, and it should not be so. The location of every delivery station should be studied from this standpoint, and its continuance should be made a matter of serious question. When all is said and done, there will remain some stations where a minority of users would go to the library if the station were discontinued, and would be benefited thereby at the expense of a little more exertion. The fact that there are some real advantages in long-range circulation should enable the librarian, in such a case, to strike some kind of a balance, satisfy himself that this particular station is or is not of resultant benefit to the community, and act accordingly. It is also possible, in some cases, to combine the deposit feature with the delivery station,

and it goes without saying that this should be done just as the delivery feature should be added to every deposit and every branch, where it is feasible.

Finally, the long range circulation may be adapted to the use of the busy by enabling them to kill two birds with one stone. Libraries are always trying, with doubtful success, to get hold of persons who are busy about something else—factory workers, shoppers, and so on. A residential district is a better place for a branch library than a shopping district, although the number of different persons who pass the door daily is larger in the latter, because there is more leisure in the residence street—less preoccupation and bustle. But if it is made possible for the shopper to use the library with practically no delay, while he is shopping, will he not take advantage of the opportunity? A recent experiment in the St. Louis Public Library convinces me that he will. We are now operating a downtown branch in the book department of a large department store, and we have an hourly messenger service between the library and this station. I believe this is the first time that such frequent delivery service has been tried. This makes it possible to leave an order at the beginning of a shopping trip and to find the book ready at the close of the trip. The interval would never be much over an hour, and might be as little as fifteen or twenty minutes.

There are two favorable factors here which it might be difficult to secure elsewhere: The shopping district here is near enough to the central library to make frequent delivery possible, and the management of the store where our station is located is broad enough to see that the possibility of borrowing a book free, from the library, even when presented as an immediate alternative to the purchase of the same book

from the counters of the store, does not, in the long run, injure sales.

It is not absolutely necessary, of course, to operate this scheme from a department store, neither is greater distance an absolute bar to frequent deliveries. I believe that this kind of long-distance service is well worth the attention of librarians.

And, in general, I believe that a realization that all long-distance service has its good points may do good by inducing us to dwell on those points and to try to make them of more influence in our work.

CONFLICTS OF JURISDICTION IN LIBRARY SYSTEMS*

At bottom, a departmental system in a large institution is simply an outcome of the fact that its head requires aid in administration. At first, perhaps, he can actually do everything with his own hand; next he requires helpers, but he can oversee them all; finally, he must have overseers, who are the only ones with whom he deals directly and for whom he naturally classifies the work and divides it among them accordingly. This is not merely a symbolical or fanciful account of such a development. There are plenty of heads of institutions, educational, commercial and industrial, who have personally seen every stage of it—who are now administering a complicated system of departments where they once did everything themselves. In particular, there are now librarians, at the head of great libraries, who began library work by performing, or at least overseeing directly, the elementary acts of which library operation may be taken to consist, and who have watched such a simple system of superintendence develop year by year into something complex.

Such a development, as I have said, is naturally based on some kind of classification. If one could sit down and, foreseeing the growth of his institution for years to come, settle upon the way in which that growth should be cared for, his classification might possibly be more logical and workable than most classifications now are. The best of them are wofully imperfect, as no one knows better than we libra-

* Read before the round table of branch libraries at the Washington conference, May 28, 1914.

rians. And when division into classes proceeds *pari passu* with growth, we are necessarily bothered with that troublesome thing—cross-classification. As our institution grows, one direction of growth and a corresponding set of conditions and needs comes into the foreground after another, and our basis of classification is apt to change accordingly.

In the library, for instance, territorial expansion has frequently claimed the right of way. It has been evident that wide regions within the municipality were not reached by the library's activities; hence the establishment of branches—practically classification on a regional or territorial basis. Next, perhaps, some other need is pushed forward—say, the necessity for special care given to the children of the community. Here is a non-territorial basis for classification, founded only upon the age of the library's users. These are not classes and sub-classes, but are entirely different primary systems of classification, whose dividing lines cross and do not run parallel. A man who should sit down and try to evolve, at first hand, some sort of classification of library work, might adopt one or the other, but not both. In one case he might divide his city into districts, with district superintendents and local librarians under each; in the other, he might divide his users by ages and tastes and have a superintendent for each. In neither case would there be cross-classification, with its over-lapping classes and consequent interferences of jurisdiction.

But this is not the way that things work out. The librarian finds it necessary to have his geographical subdivisions and also those based on age, and he adopts others also as they appear desirable, without much regard for the logic of classification. If he does take it into account, he feels that the troubles result-

ing from conflicts of jurisdiction will be more easily dealt with than those consequent upon a refusal to respond to the present demands of the work. Also—and this is an important factor—conflicts of jurisdiction, no matter how inevitable, are in the future, and the present demands of the work look vastly larger and press with insistence. Is there any wonder that he does what lies immediately before him and lets the future take care of itself?

Unfortunately, the future always does take care of itself very well indeed, and presents itself to demand a reckoning at the appointed time. The library, for instance, that has its branches for different regions and its children's room in each gets along well enough so long as its cross-classification of work exists only on paper. But the time comes when departmental organization must begin, and this must be based on the classification. There may be a superintendent of branches and a superintendent of children's work, or the branch librarians may report to the librarian directly, or there may be other dispositions with other duties and names. In any case, a children's room at a branch library necessarily finds itself in two departments, under two jurisdictions and under two heads. If the branch librarian and the children's superintendent are both yielding in disposition, the librarian may never have the conflict of jurisdiction brought to his attention. If either is yielding while the other is masterful, there will also be no trouble. In one case the branch librarian will run the adult end of her branch and leave the other to the children's department; in the other there will be one branch, at least, where the children's supervisor has little to say—a condition of things that may be tolerated, but is surely undesirable. But suppose that both heads are conscientious, assertive and anxious to push the work.

fond of organizing administrative details and impatient of interference. Here we have the possibilities of trouble at once.

The first rumblings of the storm come usually in the form of complaints of interference, on the one side or the other. Then we have a demand from both sides for a definition of their respective rights and responsibilities. The librarian is asked, for instance, in just what respects the children's librarian shall take her orders from the branch librarian and in what from the supervisor. This is a good deal like petitioning the legislature to pass a law specifying exactly when a child shall obey his father and when the mayor of the city. The librarian who enters on this plausible path will sooner or later be lost in the jungle. He has only himself to thank. Either he or his predecessor started the game and he must play it out to the end. We librarians are all responsible for each other's faults. Let us see how he may play it.

In the first place, his is the power. What is done in any department is done by his orders or by the orders of some one endowed by him with authority to give orders. He has given two persons authority over the same field at one point, and it is his business to straighten things out. Here are some possible ways:

1. The authority of one head may be absolutely extinguished in the field where conflict exists. Here we have legalized the state of things described above as existing with a combination of one spineless department-head and one very spiny one. It works, but at the expense of everything that tends to the efficiency of the extinguished authority, and I do not recommend it.

2. An attempt may be made, as noted above, to draw a line between the two spheres of authority and keep each in its place. This appeals to those who are

fond of detail, for it can be done only by considering and ticketing details. A line, defined by some one clear principle, cannot be drawn in a field of this kind between two things both of which logically cover that field. It is logical that the children's librarian in a branch should be wholly under the authority of the branch librarian, since she is a branch employe like the others. It is just as logical that she should be wholly under the authority of the supervisor, of whose department she is a part. If we are to define the things in which she is to obey the one and the other, they must be enumerated one by one. And then other things will turn up that have not been thus enumerated, and we are in trouble again. This plan, as I have said, appeals to those who revel in regulations and specifications, but I can recommend it no more than the other.

3. One department may formally and distinctly be set above the other. Or, what is the same thing, the librarian may resolve, when a conflict arises, always to decide the matter in favor of one particular department. This means, in the special case that we have been using as an illustration, either that the children's department shall be allowed to do nothing in a branch library without the consent of the branch librarian, or of the supervisor of branches, if there is one; or that all questions involving the administration of a branch children's room must depend ultimately on the chief of the children's department.

This may seem to be the same as the plan by which the authority of one department is absolutely done away in the disputed sphere. It is of the same type, but not so drastic. In the other plan one has not authority to do anything; in this, one must ask permission—not the same thing by any means. This plan is practically in effect at some libraries; it

would probably be regarded as equitable by most department heads—provided their own department were put ahead of the other. The trouble is that it involves an arbitrary subordination—one that does not exist in the nature of the classification. And this subordination is local and partial; it cannot hold good for the whole department. No one would think of placing the branch department, as a whole, under the children's department, or *vice versa*. And the objections, although not so strong as those to the extinguishment plan, are of the same kind. The efficiency of one department or the other is bound to suffer, and for this reason I do not consider this the best plan.

4. All department heads in conflicting spheres, may be regarded simply as advisers of the librarian and not as possessing authority in themselves to give orders. A conflict is thus reduced to contradictory advice from two sources. The librarian then pursues whatever course seems good to him. This plan has attractive features, especially to administrators of the type that like to keep a finger in every pie. There is doubtless danger in aloofness. The librarian must know what is going on, but I see no advantage in requiring him to decide questions of trivial detail at frequent intervals, as he must do under this plan; for conflicts generally begin in questions of detail and it is at the beginning or even earlier, in anticipation, that they must be caught and adjusted. This plan works, but it reduces the department head to a consulting expert and burdens the librarian with detail. It does not appeal to me at all.

5. The two conflicting departments may cooperate, intelligently and courteously without sacrifice of authority or self-respect, under the advice and orders of the librarian.

This is the plan that I recommend. It is the most difficult of all, and no regulations or specifications can be formulated for carrying it out. For this reason it will never be widely in favor. A wicked and rebellious generation demands a sign, and in this plan there is neither sign nor formula except that general prinicple of helpfulness and willingness to place the common whole above the selfish part that is at the antipodes of both wickedness and rebellion. It is a personal matter and it adds one important qualification to those already necessary in department heads—the ability to do team work. This qualification, however, is so important, quite apart from its necessity in connection with this plan, that we may consider it an advantage, rather than otherwise, that the plan puts it forward and insists upon it. On the whole I think that a library with mediocre department heads having this qualification is better manned, and will do more satisfactory work than one with a staff of supremely able experts, cranky, self-centered and all pulling different ways. The efforts of members of a body like a library staff are not to be measured arithmetically—they are what mathematicians call "vectors"—directed quantities, like force, velocity or acceleration. To know where a man will bring up one must have not only his speed, but its direction. The sum of two equal forces may be anything from zero up to their double, depending on their relative directions, and if the sum is zero, no matter how large the components may be, the result is precisely the same as if those components are small, or as if neither existed. It is this sort of thing that an eminent employer of labor had in mind when he advised, "If two of your subordinates don't get along together, *discharge both* of them, no matter how good they are." In this man's estimation the relative

value of team work evidently stands pretty high. I should not follow his advice, however, without giving everyone a fair chance. I have known the opinions of one department head about another and their ability to work together to improve greatly on acquaintance.

The part necessarily played by the librarian in this scheme may be regarded by some as an objection. I have already referred to administrators who, like the late Czar of Russia, prefer to regulate all the details of the kingdom by personal supervision. There is also the precisely opposite type, who like to make a good machine, set it going, and then let it alone. The trouble is that machines will not run of themselves. They need oversight, oiling, cleaning and repairing. The best require a minimum of all this, but all must have some of it. And such machinery as there is in this plan requires a maximum of oversight. It is, however, not the control of details but rather the watching of general methods and results. Is everything running smoothly, without "lost motion" or "backlash," and turning out a satisfactory finished product? If not, can the trouble be located? Yes; these two cogs do not work smoothly together. Let us find out which is at fault and adjust or replace it; but if our investigation is fruitless, possibly the best plan is to discard both.

I trust I have misled no one by treating here specifically of two departments. I might have substituted the names of a dozen others. All through library administration, and especially in the administration of a system of branch libraries, these possibilities of conflict occur. In branches they are generally between the branch administration and the central departments—finance, supplies, cataloging, book-orders, reference and circulation.

The handling of this whole matter depends, of course, on the librarian. He it must be who is to decide on general policies or go to his Board for a decision in cases so important that he feels their action necessary. If the work of departments overlaps in some field where the library's policy has not yet been decided upon and defined, he has no one to blame but himself if the adjustment is difficult. And if policies are defined in advance and pains taken to inform department heads thoroughly of their existence and import, the likelihood of serious disagreement will be considerably lessened.

It must not be forgotten, also, that the success of any plan may be increased or diminished by skill, or lack of skill, in handling it.

I am confident that any of the plans about which I have spoken unfavorably above would work better under a good librarian than the best would work under a bad one. But I forget myself; we librarians are like Kentucky whiskey—some are better than others, but there are no bad ones!

THREE KINDS OF LIBRARIANS*

The human eye is so constituted that it can see clearly but a small part of the field of vision at one time. We have learned by habit to move it about quickly and comprehensively, so that unless our attention is called to the fact we do not realize this limitation; but it exists. In like manner, it is difficult for the human mind to take a comprehensive view of a subject. We are apt to fix upon some one feature and ignore the rest. In recent times we have been devoting our attention to the personal element. We talk about the "man behind the gun" a good deal. I would not underrate him or what he can do; but it is surely necessary to have the gun itself before the man behind it can be effective. In fact, the man *per se* is about the most helpless of animals. His superiority to the mere brute lies in his ability to use tools; his inferiority in the fact that he can do almost nothing without them. A man with a gun is indeed formidable; a wildcat can do nothing with such a tool, but then he is reasonably formidable without it. I have yielded thus to the temptation to depreciate the personal element somewhat, at the beginning of an address in which it is to be discussed, because this defect of the human mind, that tends to fix it upon one feature to the exclusion of others, has of late apparently led many to think that a man is valuable in himself and by himself, without anything to work with or anything to work on.

A man is making a failure of his job; the first

* Read before the Missouri Library Association, Sedalia, November 18, 1914.

thought is that he must be replaced. Nine persons out of ten fail to inquire whether anyone at all could have succeeded under the same conditions. Your cook prepares an inedible meal; you rage and call loudly for a new regime in the kitchen; whereas all the time your competent servant has been struggling with a faulty range, tough meat and bad flour.

Shall we, then, sit down and refuse to do anything at all unless our tools and our materials are of the best? By no means; one of the chief distinctions between a capable and an inefficient worker lies in the ability of the former to make the best of unpromising conditions. No one can do as well with poor tools and materials as with good ones; but the good worker will turn out a better job with the former than the inefficient one will.

These things apply of course to the library worker as to all others, especially to librarians in small towns where tools and materials are apt to be not of the best. Among tools we may reckon buildings, books, and all kinds of library appliances. The material is the community on which the librarian by proper use of her tools, aims to produce a certain effect.

Now it is open to such a worker to view her task from any one of three different standpoints—to choose, we will say, from three different kinds of librarianship. She may be a librarian of the day before yesterday, of yesterday, or of to-day.

The librarian of the day before yesterday is the librarian of a part of the community. Not only does she make no effort to encourage the use of her library, but she distinctly discourages certain persons, and certain classes of persons, from entering it. This grade of librarian includes as many kinds as there are persons or classes of the community that

may be discouraged. Some, for instance, exclude all the poorly-dressed, or all of inferior social status; others welcome just these and exclude the well-dressed and well-to-do. The philanthropic donor of a city branch library building once waxed very wroth when she saw a carriage standing in front of the building. Her library, she said, was for the poor, not for "carriage people."

These ways of looking at things are sometimes an inheritance from former conditions. A subscription library turned into a free public library hesitates to welcome, all at once, the lower strata that have so long been banished from its doors. On the other hand, a public library that has developed from a charitable foundation regards these as its proper users and looks askance at the well-to-do, as in the case of the good lady with her "carriage people."

When I speak of the exclusion of a class of persons, I do not mean that they are formally kept out or even consciously discouraged; this is why it is so easy to be a librarian of the day before yesterday. That day was a comfortable day; an easy day to be self-satisfied in; it had its libraries for the rich and its libraries for the poor. Some class was always named, even if some were always left out.

It may be that the exclusion operates through features that are in themselves excellent. I have seen, in a small community, a library building so fine, with such an atmosphere of quiet good-taste and so lady-like a librarian, that the great public no more dared to enter therein than if a fierce lion had stood in the doorway. I have known libraries, too, in which the books were too good. Certain classes in the community were not intellectually up to them.

I have also known libraries that were never used by the foreigners in their communities, or by the

colored people. These latter, strange to say, were largely in the North. The South recognizes the Negro and pays him much attention—in its way. It settles his status and sees that it is observed. He has the last four seats on the trolley car and he has his separate library accommodations. In the North he is on an equality with the white man—in everything but reality. He is welcomed to the library in theory and he does not use it in practice. I fear that in this respect too many of us belong to the day before yesterday.

I trust that I have made it clear that the librarian of day-before-yesterday is not a bad librarian. He or she is just a librarian of day before yesterday—that is all.

Now we will step into one of Mr. H. G. Wells' "Time machines" and take a short spin ahead into yesterday. The librarian of yesterday excludes no one at all from his library; for he is within one step of being up-to-date. He discourages no person nor any class of persons. He stands in his doors with outstretched arms and announces that his library is free to all, that it has books for all—rich and poor, old and young, barbarian, Scythian, bond and free. The selection of books is well thought-out and adapted to the community in which it is. The accommodations are ample and fitting. Everyone is welcome. What more could you ask? Nothing at all; provided you are still in yesterday. Yesterday this sort of library was regarded as the last word in the popularization of the book, and it is indeed a long step in advance of day-before-yesterday. The librarian's material is before him; he has good books; is more needed than this? Yea, verily. One may have a nail and a hammer to drive it; also an egg, and a pan to fry it, yet one cannot fry the egg with the hammer. Some

selective action is necessary before we can attain the result that we want. A minister, presiding at a wedding, in which several couples were to be united at once, read the marriage service and then exclaimed: "I pronounce you men and wives; now you can sort yourselves." The trouble is that things will not "sort themselves"; they must have some one to sort them —and this is what is the matter with the library and the librarian of yesterday. They fail to make connection between the man and the book, so that part of the fine collection remains wholly or relatively unused, and part of the community that it ought to serve remains apart from the library, despite the librarian's outstretched arms and his words of welcome. If he had read his Bible as his great-grandparents used to do, he would have realized that to fill the table at the wedding feast of literature and life a simple invitation sufficeth not. We must go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in. The attitude of passive expectancy, of ability and willingness to serve those who come, was well enough for yesterday, but not for the new library day that has dawned in these United States of America. Apparently the library dawn moves eastward as the physical day moves westward, for over in the mother country only a few lofty peaks are yet gilded by its sunshine. Even in our own land there are gorges where the dusk lingers; there are even grottoes where darkness will always be. But we are mostly in the light. We realize that if we have a book on the dyeing of textile fabrics and if there is an unheeding man in our community who would be helped by that book, all the complacent receptivity that we can muster will not suffice to bring them together. And with this knowledge comes an awakening of conscience. Long ago we stopped cry-

ing out "Am I my brother's keeper?" We realize that as members of the community we must bear our share of responsibility for what is done in the community and that collectively we must take measures for the community's welfare. Each of us is a Roman dictator, in that it is our business to see that the Republic suffers no harm. Thus the community appoints special officers to look out for the interests of its members in certain directions. We public librarians are such officers. We are proud of saying that we stand on the same plane as the teachers in our schools and the professors in our colleges; nay, even a little higher, for the facilities for education over which we preside are offered long after school and college years are over.

Now the teacher does not stand in the doorway and announce that she is willing and ready to instruct all who may so desire in reading, writing and arithmetic—that she has a well-equipped schoolroom, blackboards, globes and textbooks for all who will take advantage of them. Not so; the community goes out and compels its members to take advantage of all these things. In like manner, also, the community makes all sorts of laws for its own preservation and betterment; it does not say "See, here are good laws; come ye who will and obey them." On the contrary it goes out into highways and hedges and sees that all its members obey.

I would not push this analogy too far. No one expects that the community will require that every one within its borders shall use the public library so many times a month, or, indeed that it shall be used at all. The nature of the institution precludes such compulsion. But it should require that every effort be made to see that no section of the books on the library shelves shall lie idle and that no section of the

community shall fail to use books, either through ignorance or through doubt of a welcome.

The librarian should say: Here is an unused book. Is it without value in this community? Then let it make place for a better. Has it value? Then why is it not used? Somewhere, in this community, is the man, woman or child, who, whether realizing it or not, would derive pleasure or profit, or both from reading it. It is my business to seek out that person.

Again: Here is a man who does not read books. Is this because no book would appeal to him? Impossible! He may think so, but there lives no one to whom the soul of some fellow man, speaking through the printed page, will not bring a welcome message. Is there such a book on my shelves? If so, it is my business to get it into that man's hands; if not, I must buy, beg or borrow it as soon as I may.

When the librarian has begun to talk in this fashion, lo! the dawn is shining, he is a librarian of to-day. The librarian of to-day frowns on no one, discourages no one; and he stands not passively at his door with open arms. He walks through his library; he walks through his town. He knows the books in one and the dwellers in the other, and he knows both in their relationships, actual and possible. If there are disused books on his shelves or non-readers in his community, it is not because he has made no effort to bring them together; his failures are not those of negligence.

The other day, sitting in a stalled trolley car, my eye fell upon a street-cleaner, and I began to watch him with interest. He was busy—apparently, I was going to say, but that does him injustice. He was really busy. While I watched him—and the car was delayed for some little time—he was constantly at

work, pushing over the asphalt the broad scraper that was intended to rid it of dust and refuse. And yet he did not clean the street, for he took no account of the inequalities of its surface. These required intelligent adaptation of his movements at every instant, and to this he paid no attention. He went through the motions; his actual expenditure of physical energy was probably as great as if he had mixed a little brain-work with it, but it failed to accomplish what it ought, simply from that lack. And yet it would have been difficult for any overseer to give him orders that would have bettered the matter. It would have been hard to point out at any given instant, his errors of commission or of omission. The only way in which one could tell that he was not doing his work properly was by the result. He was put there to clean the street—and the street was not cleaned.

So with the librarians of yesterday and the day before. They are hard workers, not idlers. They have the tools, and they go through the motions. They may tire themselves out with their labor. Their library buildings may be attractive and clean; their technique perfect, their books well selected and in good order, their catalogs excellent. It is hard to point to any one thing that they are doing incorrectly or that they are omitting. And yet we must judge their work by its fruits; they are put into a community of actual or potential readers in charge of a collection of books. What are these for, if not to be read? Yet many remain untouched. For what purpose have the schools taught the townspeople to read? Thousands of them make no good use of that knowledge. To the librarian of to-day the non-realization of this and the lack of effort to remedy it mean failure. In order to make a little more definite our ideas of these three kinds of librarians, let us consider one or two

very practical problems and see how each would probably view them and act upon them.

First. The library circulates no books on plumbing. For the librarian of the day before yesterday, this is no problem at all. Probably his library has no books on plumbing. His library is not for plumbers, and he has never suspected that it could be. As for the plumbers in his community, they too have never considered the possibility that they might learn something of their work from books in a public library. They are therefore silent and uncomplaining. Peace reigns and there is a general state of satisfaction all around—the satisfaction of blissful ignorance and of the day before yesterday.

The librarian of yesterday, on the other hand, sees the problem clearly and is concerned about it. He has good books on plumbing and nobody reads them. Evidently the more advanced grade of the librarian has not affected the plumbers—they still remain in ignorance of the public library. But what is he to do? Here is the library; here are the books; here is the librarian, ready and willing to distribute them to all who may come. If the generation—or any part of it—is so wicked and perverse that it comes not, what is there to do? What, indeed! And so library and community remain in the twilight of yesterday just before the dawn.

The librarian of to-day not only sees the problem and is concerned about it, but he proceeds to do something. Just what he does or how he does it is of far less consequence than the fact that he sees action in the matter to be necessary and possible. He may go personally and interview the plumbers; he may send them lists; he may get permission to address the plumbers' union; he may do one or many of a thousand things to remedy matters, and although it is cer-

tain that what he does will not be completely effective, it is equally certain that it will have *some* good effect, which is the main thing.

Problem Second. Examination of the registry list shows that there are practically no card holders in a certain part of the town. As in the former case, this is no problem at all to the day before yesterday librarian. Its existence would in general not appear to him, certainly not as the result of any kind of statistical investigation. If he were informed of it he would regard the fact with complacency. The library is for readers, and if certain persons are non-readers they had better keep away. Nothing could be simpler. The librarian of yesterday, on the other hand, feels that all is not right. It is certainly too bad that when library privileges are offered free to all, so large a portion of the community should fail to take advantage of them. The library stands ready to help these people, if they will only come. Why don't they?

The librarian of yesterday thus stops with a question; the librarian of to-day proceeds to answer it. He finds out why they don't come. He may discover one or more of any number of things; whatever may be the causes, they are sure to be interesting, at least to him, for the to-day librarian is a born investigator. It may be that the non-readers are literate, but take no interest in books; perhaps they say they have no time to read; possibly the library has not the kind of books that they like; they may be foreigners, reading no English, and the library may have no books in their tongue. Whatever the trouble may be, the librarian of to-day sets about to remedy it. He may not succeed; but it is the diagnosis and the attempt at treatment, not its success, that constitute him what he is.

Problem Third. The reading done through the li-

brary is trivial and inconsequential. The fiction drawn is of low order, and there is little else read. The way in which this will affect the three types of librarian may be predicted at once. The librarian of the day-before-yesterday heeds it not; the librarian of yesterday heeds and perhaps worries, but does nothing. The librarian of to-day finds out the trouble and then tries to remedy it.

And so it goes: you may construct other problems for yourselves and imagine their solution, or lack of solution.

Now, it is obvious that there are great and evident objections to being a librarian of to-day and corresponding advantages in being one of the other kinds. In the first place the to-day variety of librarianship involves brainwork and it is always difficult to use one's brain—we saw that in the case of the street-cleaner. Then this kind of librarian must be always looking for trouble. Instead of congratulating himself that all is going smoothly, he must set out with the premise that all cannot be going smoothly. There must be some way in which his books can be made to serve more people and serve them better; and it is his business to find out that way. Then the to-day librarian must use his statistics. The librarian of the day before yesterday probably takes none at all. The librarian of yesterday collects them with diligence, but regards any suggestion that they might be of use somewhat as the lazy wood-sawyer did the advice that he should sharpen his saw. "I should think I had a big enough job to cut up all this wood," he replied petulantly, "without stopping to sharpen saws." The librarian of yesterday has trouble enough in collecting and tabulating his statistics without stopping to use them—to make any deductions from them—to learn where the library machine is failing and where he

should use the wrench or the oil can. All these things and many others make it easier for the overworked librarian to drop back into yesterday, or the day before. It should be borne in mind, however, that the difference between the three types of librarian is not so much difference in the amount of work done as it is in attitude of mind. The librarian of to-day does not necessarily expend more energy than the librarian of day before yesterday—but it is expended in a different direction and with a different object. It is to be feared that some librarians of small libraries allow themselves to become discouraged after reading of the great things that have been accomplished by large institutions with plenty of money to spend—the circulation of millions of books yearly, the purchase of additions by the tens of thousands, the provision of exhibitions for the children, the story-telling by professionals, the huge collections on special subjects, technology, art or history. It almost seems as if success were simply a matter of spending and as if without money to spend, failure should be expected as a matter of course.

On the contrary, all that the money does is to make possible success on a large and sensational scale—without the proper spirit and the proper workers the result might be failure on a scale quite as sensational. And an enthusiastic spirit, a high aim and unflagging energy—these are things that no money can buy and that will bring success on the small scale as on the large one.

We are fortunate—we who have charge of libraries and are trying to do something worth while with them—that there is perhaps less of the spirit of pure commercialism among us than among some other classes of workers. For this, in part, we have to thank our inadequate salaries. Persons who desire to work

simply for the material reward will select some other field. We are glad to get our reward—we certainly earn it; but I venture to say that in the case of most of us there is also something in the work that appeals to us. And that something is the thing that, pushed to its furthest extent, will bring the dawn of to-day into the most backward library. It is not a very inspiring thing simply to sit down and watch a pile of books—hardly more so, I should think, than to take care of a pile of bricks or a load of turnips. Interest, enthusiasm, inspiration, come with realization of the fact that every one of those books has a mission and that it is the librarian's business to find what it is and to see that it is performed. In the large, wealthy institution this duty may be accompanied by the expenditure of vast sums, and may be performed with the aid of things that only large sums of money can buy; in the small library there may be but a single librarian and only a few dollars to spend. But, just as in the case of a city librarian with an ample salary, she has open to her the choice of those three types of librarianship—the day before yesterday, yesterday and to-day.

And how about the librarian of to-morrow? Perhaps it may be as well to leave him or her for future consideration; but I cannot help saying just a word. May it not be that in the days to come we shall have enough civic pride to do whatever we may find to do —in our libraries or anywhere else, not with our eyes fixed only upon the work itself, important as that may be, but with the broader viewpoint of its effect upon the whole community? May it not be that this librarian of to-morrow will ask not, "Will it raise my circulation?" or even "Will it improve the quality of my reading?" but "Will it better the reading that is done in this community?" That librarian will not rejoice

that his library circulation of good novels has dropped, when he realizes that twice as many bad novels are bought and read outside. He will be pleased that the children in his library have learned to wash their hands, but chiefly because he hopes that what they have learned may react upon the physical cleanliness —and perhaps on the moral cleanliness, too—of the community. Much as he will love the library, he will love it as an agency for the improvement of the community in which he lives and works, and he will do nothing for its aggrandizement, expansion or improvement that involves a change of the community in the opposite direction. We shall not see one library rejoicing because it has enticed away the users of some other library; we may even see a library rejoicing that it has lost its readers in Polish history, we will say, when it becomes known that they have gone to another library with a better collection in that subject.

I confess that I am looking forward to the day when we shall take this view—when the adage "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost" may be forgotten among institutions in the same town. The policy that it represents makes for high speed, perhaps, but not for solidarity. In a fight such as we are waging with the forces of ignorance and indifference we should all keep shoulder to shoulder. This is why the librarian should say: "I am a citizen; nothing in this city is without interest to me." That is why he should be a librarian of to-day, and why he may even look forward with hopefulness to the dawn of a still better to-morrow.

SCHOOL LIBRARIES AND MENTAL TRAINING

Is it more important in education to impart definite items of information or to train the mind so that it will know how to acquire and wish to acquire? To ask the question is to answer it; yet we do not always live up to our lights.

In the older methods the teacher, or rather his predecessors, decided what it would be necessary for the child to memorize, and then he was made to memorize, while still without appreciation of the need of so doing. We are perhaps in danger today of going to the other extreme. We require so little memorization by the student that the memory, as a practical tool of everyday life, is in danger of falling into disuse. It is surely possible for us to exercise our pupils' memories, to develop them, and to control them, without giving them the fatal idea that memory is a substitute for thought, or that the assimilation of others' ideas, perfect though it may be, will altogether take the place of the development of one's own. There are still things that one must learn by heart, but since they must be retained below the threshold of consciousness, it is well that if possible they should also be acquired below that threshold. The problem of consciously learning a quantity of items of any kind and then relegating them to one's subconsciousness in such a way that they will be available at any given time is not, of course, impossible. Most of us have at our disposal many facts that we have learned in this way; but I venture to assert that most of us have lost a large proportion of what we thus

acquired. Now a man never learns by rote the names of his relations, the positions of the rooms in his house, the names of the streets in his town. He has acquired them subconsciously as he needs them. When the human mind becomes convinced of the need of information of this kind "in its business," the acquiring comes as a matter of course. In a language, the paradigms may be learned unconsciously when the pupil sees that they are necessary in order to understand an interesting passage; the multiplication table and tables of weights and measures require no conscious memorization; or at least such memorization may be undertaken voluntarily as a recognized means to a desired end. I say these things may be done; I am sure that they are in many schools; I am equally sure that they were unheard of in my own boyhood; that is, as recognized methods in teaching. Of course, in spite of schools and teachers and methods, a vast amount of information and training has always been acquired in this way. I do not remember ever "learning to read" as a set task. I am sure that none of my children ever did so. We recognized the desirability of knowing how. We wanted to learn, and so we learned; that is all. Of course our teachers and parents and friends helped us along.

Is not this what the school is for—to make the pupil anxious to learn and then to help him? When all schools are conducted on this principle, we shall be very happy, but apparently it is not so simple as it would appear.

What we should try to approximate, at all events, is an emancipation from the thraldom of unwillingness on the part of the pupil—to bring it about that he shall desire to learn and will take what measures he can to do so, gladly availing himself of what help we can offer him.

I have said that what we need is to stimulate the pupil's desire and then to satisfy it. I have known teachers who were competent to do both—who could take an ignorant, unwilling pupil and make of him an enthusiast, thirsting for knowledge, in a few weeks. We all know of the ideal university whose faculty consisted of Mark Hopkins on one end of a log. I am sorry the creator of that epigram put his teacher on a log. There are plenty of logs, and, from this fact, too many persons, I am afraid, have leaped to the conclusion that there are also plenty of Mark Hopkinses. I fear that one trouble with educators is that, hitching their wagons to stars, they have assumed the possibility that terrestrial luminaries also are able to raise us to the skies. If we had a million Mark Hopkinses and a million boys for them to educate, we should need only a sufficient quantity of logs; we should be forever absolved from planning schoolhouses and making out schedules, from writing textbooks and establishing libraries. As it is, we must do all these things. We must adopt any and all devices to arouse and hold the pupil's interest, and we must similarly seek out and use all kinds of machinery to satisfy that interest when once aroused. Of these devices and machines, the individual teacher, with or without his textbooks, lectures, recitations, laboratory work, and formal courses, is only one, and perhaps in some cases not the one to be preferred as the primary agent. Among such devices I believe that a collection of books, properly selected, disposed, and used can be made to play a very important part, both in arousing interest in a subject and in satisfying it—in other words, in teaching it properly.

And first let us see what it may do to stimulate a general interest in knowledge. Of late I have seen cropping out here and there what seems to me a ped-

agogical heresy—the thesis that no kind of training is of value in fitting the pupil for anything but the definite object that it has in view. We can, according to this view, teach a boy to argue about triangles, but this will not help him in a legal or business discussion. We may teach him to solve equations, and he will then be an equation-solver—nothing else. We may teach him to read Greek and he will then be some sort of a Greek scholar, but his reaction to other attempts to teach him will not be affected. Anything like a general training is a contradiction in terms. If this is true, a great part of what I am saying is foolish, but I do not believe it. Doubtless we have exaggerated the effect of certain kinds of training. The old college graduate who, having been through four years of Latin, Greek, and mathematics, considered himself able with slight additional training, to undertake to practice law or medicine or manage a parish, was probably too sanguine. Yet I refuse to believe that a man's brain is so shut off in knowledge-tight compartments that one may exercise one part of it without the slightest effect on the others. I cannot now write with my toes, but I am sure that I could learn to do so much more quickly because I know how to use my fingers for the purpose.

And it is indubitable, I think, that the best general preparation for mental activity of whatever kind is contact with the minds of others—early, late, and often. It tones up all one's reactions—makes him mentally stronger, quicker, and more accurate. Some children get this at home, where there is a numerous family of persons who are both thoughtful and mentally alert. Some meet at home, besides members of the family, visitors who add to the variety of their contacts. Few get it in school, with much variety. And it is futile to expect most of our children to get it anywhere directly from persons. This being the

case, it is wonderfully fortunate that we have so many of the recorded souls of human beings between the covers of books. With them mental contacts may be numerous, wide, and easy. To interest a man in a stretch of country take him up to a height whence he may overlook it. There is a patch of woods, there a hill, there is a winding stream. He will see in imagination the wild flowers under the trees, the wind-swept rocks behind the hill, the trout in the stream. He will wonder, too, what unimagined things there may be and he will long to find out. To interest a pupil in a subject turn him loose in a room containing a hundred books about it. He will browse about, finding a dozen things that he understands and a hundred that he does not. He will get such a bird's-eye view that his stimulated imagination will long for closer acquaintance. And if you want to interest him in the world of ideas in general, turn him loose in a general library. The things that he will get are not to be ascertained by an examination. They are intangible, but their results are not.

In an illuminating article on the events just preceding the present European war, Professor Munroe Smith holds that it was precipitated chiefly by bringing to the front at every step military rather than diplomatic considerations. The trouble with military men, he says, is that they take no account of "imponderables"—by which he means public opinion, national feeling, injured pride, joy, grief—all those things, intellectual and emotional, that cannot be expressed in terms of men, guns, supplies, and military position. I have been wondering whether some other technically trained persons—educators, for instance, do not tend toward a similar neglect of imponderables, measuring educational values solely in terms of hours, and units, and the passing of examinations. It is a fault common to all highly trained specialists.

The Scripture has a phrase for it, as for most things —"ye neglect the weightier matters of the law—judgment and faith." These, you will note, are to be classed with Professor Munroe Smith's "imponderables," whereas mint, anise, and cummin are commercial products.

At least one noted educator, William James, did not make this error, for he bids us note that the emotional "imponderable"—though he does not use this word—possesses the priceless property of unlocking within us unsuspected stores of energy and placing them at our disposal. "I thank thee, Roderick, for the word," says Fitz-James in "The Lady of the Lake": "it nerves my heart; it steels my sword." One would hardly expect to find educational psychology in Scott's verse, but here it is. The word that Roderick Dhu spoke (I forget just what it was, but I think he called his rival a bad name) unlocked in Fitz-James an unexpected store of reserve energy, and the result, as I recall it, was quite unfortunate from the Gaelic point of view. We cannot afford to neglect the imponderables; and it is their presence and their influence that are fostered by a collection of books. If you will add together the weight of leather, paper, glue, thread, and ink in a book you will get the whole weight of the volume. There is naught ponderable left; and yet what is left is all that makes the thing a book—all that has power to influence the lives and souls of men—the imponderable part, fit for the unlocking of energies.

I would not have you think, although I believe this to be at bottom a matter of principles, that it is not possible to apply these principles very directly and concretely in the daily practice of an educational institution. I desire to call your attention for a moment to the testimony of one who has had great experience and practice in the administration of a

collection of books in such an institution and in their use for the purposes already outlined—Mr. Frederick C. Hicks, assistant librarian of Columbia University, New York City, from whose recent review article on this subject I propose to quote a few paragraphs. Mr. Hicks is writing primarily of college instruction, but, as he notes in the first paragraph that I shall quote, what he says applies with equal cogency to the secondary school. He writes:

> The general tendency in all instruction today, including even that in preparatory and high schools, is from what may be called the few-book method to the many-book method—a recognition of the power of the printed page for which librarians have always stood sponsor. The lecture, note-taking, text-book and quiz method of instruction is fast passing away in undergraduate as well as in graduate study. Textbooks are still in use in undergraduate and Master of Arts courses, but they have been relegated to a subordinate position. Emphasis is laid on work done and the assimilation of ideas gathered from many sources rather than upon memorizing the treatise of one author. Necessarily, references are chiefly to easily accessible works of secondary authority, and reading instead of research is the objective.
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> From the library point of view, the growth of the laboratory or case method of instruction appears to be an independent phenomenon. It should be noticed, however, that coincident with it is the general tendency to adopt a policy of teaching each subject with emphasis on its relations to other subjects.
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> Most universities now give courses for which no textbook is available. For instance, Professor Frederick J. Turner, of Harvard University, announces in a syllabus of 116 pages that there is no textbook suitable for use in his course on the History of the West in the United States. He thereupon gives citations to about 2,100 separate readings contained in 1,300 volumes, and says that his course requires not less than 120 pages of reading per week in these books. Professor James Harvey Robinson's course in Columbia University on the History of the Intellectual Class in Western Europe has no textbook, and the reading for a class of 156 students is indicated in a pamphlet of 53 pages, containing references to 301 books. Illustrations could be taken from almost any subject in the university curriculum.

This is essentially a teacher's view. Listen now to that of a public librarian, Mr. John Cotton Dana, of Newark, New Jersey. He says:

> In our high schools we spend literally millions of dollars to equip laboratories, kitchens, carpenter shops, machine shops, and what not, to be used by a small part of the pupils for a small part of the short school day. This is partly because so to do is the fashion of the hour, partly also because the products of work in those shops,

kitchens, and laboratories can be seen, touched, and handled, are real things even to the most unintelligent.

For books, the essential tools of every form of acquisition, we spend, outside of textbooks, a few paltry thousands. The things a child makes we can see, and we are impressed by them; the knowledge he gains, the power of thought he acquires—these cannot be made visible and are not appreciated by the ignorant; they can only be certified to by the teacher and demonstrated by the student's words and deeds as he goes through life.

Mastery of print is mastery of world-knowledge. Our young people do not have it. Surely they should be led to acquire it, and where better than in the high schools? To aid them in this acquisition the high schools should have ample collections of books, and these collections of books should become active teaching organisms through the ministrations of competent librarians.

Of all teaching laboratories, there is one which is plainly of supreme importance—that of books.

I trust that you are with me so far; for I am about to make a further advance that experience teaches me is very difficult, except for librarians. I am going to urge that your collection of books, when you have made it, be put in charge of one who has studied the methods of making the contents of books available to the reader—their shelving, physical preparation, classification, cataloguing; the ways in which to fit them to their users, to record their use, and to prevent their abuse. This means a trained librarian.

In all departments where expert knowledge and skill are necessary it is difficult to explain to a non-expert the reasons for this necessity and exactly in what the expert knowledge consists. We are so accutomed to accept the fact in certain departments that it passes there without question. Unfortunately that is not the case with the selection and administration of a library. Most persons understand quite well that special training is necessary before one can practice law, or medicine, or engineering. No one would undertake to drive a motor car or even ride a bicycle without some previous experience; but it is quite usual to believe that a collection of books may be administered and its use controlled by totally untrained and inexperienced persons—a retired clergy-

man, a broken-down clerk, a janitor, perhaps. I once asked a young woman who came for advice about taking up library work what had inclined her toward that particular occupation. She was quite frank with me; she said: "Why, my father and mother didn't think I was good for anything else." This estimate of the library is by no means confined to the parents of would-be library workers. And even where it is recognized that some training and experience are necessary in administering a large public institution, there is a lingering feeling that a comparatively small collection, like that in a school, needs no expert supervision. The fact that there are in a school plenty of experts in other lines seems to have been not without its effect on this attitude. "Why, Professor Smith is one of the best chemists in the state; Miss Jones is an acknowledged authority on oriental history; do you mean to tell me that either of them would not make a perfectly satisfactory librarian?" Which is something like saying, "Mr. Robinson is our foremost banker; should he not be able to superintend the dyeing department in a textile mill?" Or, "Rev. Mr. Jenkins is our most eloquent pulpit orator; he can surely run the 2:15 express!"

Are my metaphors too violent? I think not. We are dealing here with imponderables, as I have said, but the most imponderable thing of all, and the most potent, is the human mind. To wield, concentrate, and control our battery of energies we want a correlated energy—one whose relations to them all are close and one who knows how to pull all the throttles, turn all the valves, and operate all the mechanism that brings them into play. It takes two years of hard work, nowadays, for a college graduate to get through a library school, and it should not be necessary to argue that during these two years he is work-

ing hard on essentials and is assimilating material that the untrained man however able, cannot possibly acquire in a few month's casual association with a library or from mere association with books, no matter how long or how intimate. You will pardon me, I am sure, some further quotation from Mr. Hicks's illuminating article. After calling our attention to the fact that the effort to meet changing conditions in instruction is purely technical, he goes on:

> The librarian stands in the position of an engineer to whom is presented a task which by the methods of his profession he must perform. Numerical growth, expansion, addition of new schools and new subjects, and the introduction of the laboratory method by which books are made actual tools for use, all mean to the librarian more books, larger reading-rooms and more of them, a large staff specialized and grouped into departments, the supervision of a complicated system, and capable business administration. These are all technical matters and are of sufficient magnitude to require all of the time and strength of those to whom they are entrusted. . . .
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> In a reference library, open shelves, whether in department libraries or in the general library, require much high-grade library service. The reference librarian becomes a direct teacher in the use of books and gives constant assistance not merely in finding separate books but in dealing with the whole literature of a subject. . . .
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> The whole development from the few-book method to the many-book method presupposes a system of reserve books. By this expression is meant the placing of a collection of books behind an enclosure of some kind from which they are given out by a library assistant for use in the room. The reserve collections, continually changing in accordance with the directions of instructors, are in reality composite textbooks. . . .
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> The mere clerical work of maintaining an efficient reserve system is large, its success being dependent upon intelligent co-operation between the teaching faculty and the library, but it involves also a technical problem to be solved by the librarian. What relation does the number of copies of a given reserve book bear to its use? To put the question concretely, how many copies of a book are required to supply a class of 200 students, all of whom must read thirty pages of the book within two weeks?

I like so much one of Mr. Hicks's expressions that I desire to emphasize it at the close of what I am saying. A library, used for teaching purposes in a school, is indeed, "a composite textbook." It insures contact with a composite instead of a single mind.

The old idea was that contact of this kind always resulted in confusion—in mental instability. There was a time when the effort was to protect the mind through life from any such unbalancing contact. The individual was protected from familiarity with more than one set of opinions—religious, political, social, philosophical, scientific. He was taught facts as facts and no emphasis was placed on the more important fact that there are degrees of certainty and points of view. The next step was to give the individual a free head after the formal processes of education had terminated. Getting out of college was like escaping from a box, where one had been shut up with Presbyterians and Free Traders and Catastrophists and Hegelians—or their opposites, for the contents of all the boxes were not alike. Now, we set the boy free when he enters college and we are beginning to give him a little fresh air in the high school. Why not go back to the beginning? Why not, at any rate, avoid the implication that there is the same backing behind all that we teach or tell? Some teachers, and some parents, have made this plan succeed. One of them is Mr. H. R. Walmsley, who writes in the *Volta Review* (Washington, April, 1915), on "How I Taught My Boy the Truth." Says he:

> I pondered over these things, and determined that I would never tell a falsehood to my child; that I would tell him the truth upon every subject, and that I would not evade or refuse to answer any question. I kept my resolution and have obtained most excellent results. The child doubted nothing I told him. He knew that as far as I was able I would reply truthfully to any question he might care to ask. In answering him I was always careful to qualify my statements thus: "This is so," "I believe so," "It is believed to be," "It is claimed to be," "Those who should know say," etc. So he knew the basis from which I spoke. Throughout his life, when he was told anything that looked doubtful, he would say, "I will ask father."

This plan is practicable from the child's earliest years. As soon as he learns to read we may begin to supplement it by reference to original documents.

This means a library at the very beginning, and at high school age it means a large library. It need not all be in the school. In the smallest towns there are now respectable public collections; the school may confine itself to the subjects in its own curriculum. But whatever we do, let us not teach the child, with the implication of equal authority, that twice two is is four, that material bodies are composed of molecules, and that the Tories in the Revolution were all bad. Tell him that there are other aspects, if they exist, and as soon as he is able let him examine those aspects. He will be able far sooner than some of us are willing to admit.

We librarians feel somewhat strongly on this matter because our own institutions possess by their very nature that form of neutrality that exposes both sides without advocating either. It seems to be assumed by some persons that neutrality means ignorance. Of course, ignorance is one method of insuring it. If a fairy story opens with the announcement that the King of Nowaria is at war with the Prince of Sumboddia, you cannot take sides until you know something about the quarrel. The trouble is that we do not live in fairyland. In my home city the school authorities have been trying to cultivate this kind of neutrality by cautioning principals not to discuss the European war with their pupils. What is the result? One of my branch librarians says in a recent report: "I have been greatly interested by the fact that the high-school boys and girls never ask for anything about the war. Not once during the winter have I seen in one of them a spark of interest in the subject. It seems so strange that it should be necessary to keep them officially ignorant of this great war because the grandfather of one spoke French and of another, German." With this I thoroughly agree. I am not sure

that I do not prefer a thorough and bigoted partisanship to this neutrality of ignorance. Better than both is the opportunity for free investigation with enlightened guidance. The public library offers the opportunity for the fullest and freest contact with the minds of the world. We try to give guidance, also, as we can; but we have not the opportunities of you teachers. Guidance is your business and your high privilege; and if some of you have in the past guided as the jailer guides his prisoners—for a walk around the prison yard with ball and chain—let us be thankful that this oppressive view is giving place to the freer idea of a guide as a counselor and friend. Such guidance means intellectual freedom. Freedom means choice, and choice implies a collection from which to choose. This means a library and the school library is thus an indispensable tool in the hands of those teachers to whom education signifies neutral training, the arousing of neutral energies, and a control of the imponderables of life—those things without physical weight which yet count more in the end than all the masses with which molecular physics has to deal.

THE LIBRARY AND THE BUSINESS MAN*

The electricians have a word that has always interested me—the word and the thing it signifies. It is "hysteresis," and it means that quality in a mass of iron that resists magnetization, so that if the magnetizing force is a moving one the magnetism always lags a little behind it. We see this quality in many other places besides magnetic bodies—the almost universal tendency of effects to lag behind their causes. I like to watch it in the popular mind—the failure to "catch on" quickly—the appreciation that comes just a little after the thing to be appreciated. Lag everywhere, in apprehension, in knowledge, in the realization of a situation. Everywhere hysteresis. Of course, sometimes the lag is great and sometimes it is slight. It may be affected by physical distance, as when the European thinks that Indians camp in the suburbs of Pittsburg and that the citizens of Indianapolis hunt the buffalo of an evening; or it may be a function of mental distance, as when the Wall Street financier fondly imagines that this country is still populated chiefly by lambs, as it undoubtedly was fifty years ago. I like to watch it as it affects the idea of the public library as some people hold it. Now of course, without progress, change, motion of some kind, there could be no lag. In a permanent magnet there is no hysteresis. If the Indians and the buffalo were still with us, the European would be thinking the truth. If we had not learned that the gold-brick and the green goods were frauds, we could still be fleeced. And if libraries were still what they were fifty years

* A luncheon address to the Advertising Club of St. Louis.

ago, there would be no lag in the ideas that some people hold about them. Libraries have changed. Some of you know it and some of you do not. Libraries have changed in the kind of printed matter that they collect and preserve; in the kind of people to whom they make their appeal; in the way in which they try to make the former available to the latter. They have utterly changed in their own conception of their status in the community, of what they owe to the community and how they ought to go about it, to pay the debt.

The old library was first and foremost a collection of material for scholars; the new is for the busy citizen, to help him in what he is busy about, to make it possible for him to do more work in less time. It has taken some time for the library to see itself in this light, but it has taken the great body of our citizens still longer to recognize and act on the change—else I should not be talking to you to-day about the library and the business man. The modern library is concerned, much more largely than the old, with contemporary relations, with what is happening and what is just going to happen. It sympathizes with the men who do things. It tries to let them know what is going on about them, and to assist them in what they are attempting—whether it be to achieve a world-wide peace or to devise a new non-refillable bottle.

The library has placed itself in a position where it can do this better than any other institution, for it is essentially non-partisan. Probably it is our only non-partisan institution. Mr. Bryan's impartial government newspaper has not yet printed its first number. The school must take sides, for its deals solely with children. The library alone can store up material on all sides of every mooted question and offer it to him who reads, without in any way taking sides itself. It may run the risk of misconception. We

had a big exhibit of war pictures last year. The Pacifists protested. It was very dreadful, they said, to see a library encouraging the militaristic spirit. This year we have a peace exhibit—prepared by the Union Against Militarism. The Preparedness people are horrified. They hate to see a library siding with those who would drag our country in the dust of humiliation. The trouble with all these good people is just hysteresis—lag. It may have been fifty years ago that a portrait of a monarch in a library meant that the institution was for him, body and soul. Now it means simply that he is an interesting contemporary thing. Display of a cartoon representing Woodrow Wilson doing something disgraceful does not imply on our part detestation of the president, but only a willingness to let the public see a good bit of drawing or perhaps to show them how some part of the community is thinking and feeling. It is all a part of our efforts at up-to-dateness—our struggles to brush off the dust and sweep away the cobwebs of medievalism.

As an incident of these struggles, we have discovered the existence of the Business Man. We have tried to find out what he is driving at and to help a little—to stock the kind of information that he wants and to help him get at it. An obstacle in the way has been the fact that much of what he wants is to be obtained best from material that the older libraries knew nothing of and would have despised had they known it—partly, printed matter that had no existence in those days, like the huge trade catalog and the informative railway folder; partly material that was ignored because it had no connection with scholarly pursuits—time tables, statistical schedules, directories, lists of names and addresses, commercial publications, maps, information regarding trade-

routes and conditions. If the scholar of fifty years ago wanted to be set right about a Greek preposition or to find the color of Henry VII's hair, he knew where to go: the library was the proper and inevitable place for such data. He brushed the dust from a pile of books and proceeded to look them up. But if he wanted to know the quickest way to ship goods to Colombo, Ceylon, or the comparative exports of cereals from Russia during the last decade, or the design of the latest machine for effecting a given result, did he go to the library? Remember that this is supposed to be fifty years ago. I am afraid I must confess that I don't know where he went. I fear that in most cases he didn't go at all, for business men as well as libraries have grown in the last half century—but I am quite sure that he went nowhere near the library.

The reason was that printed information of this kind either did not then exist or was thought improper for collection by a scholarly institution. If anyone had asked for it I know what the librarian would have said, for the same thing is occasionally still said by librarians, and I hear it at department stores and everywhere else where there is distribution of objects necessary to our lives. They would have said—"There has been no demand for it, so we don't need to keep it." Demand for it! Of course not. Is there any demand for fish in a sand-bank or for free-trade arguments in a stand-pat Republican newspaper? People go for things where they know the things are to be found; and they knew well fifty years ago that none of these things were to be found in a library. The sad thing is that altho the libraries have reformed, hysteresis is still getting in its deadly work. There is a lag of apprehension and appreciation among our business men, many of whom think the library is still the same old dusty, cobwebby institution of 1850.

Take my word for it, it is not. It stocks all the things that the librarian used contemptuously to call *biblia abiblia*—books that are no books—city directories by the hundred, trade maps, commercial information, trade catalogs, advertising folders, railway announcements, hundreds of things that will answer the questions that every business man wants, or ought to want, to know. We, or any other library, may not have precisely what you want. We are not yet perfect and we have much to learn. But we are buying and putting at the business man's disposal the kind of material that will help him in his business.

The modern library is democratic, not autocratic. It does not hand you down a volume from a very high shelf and tell you that is exactly what you want and you mustn't ask for anything else. It says: we are the agents of a co-operative concern. For convenience sake, just as in the case of the public schools, you conclude to tax yourselves to maintain a public collection of books, instead of having to form private collections of your own, smaller and vastly more expensive. We are in communication with every one of you by telephone. The machine for which you have paid is all ready to work—stoked and cleaned and oiled. Why don't you press the button? Those who don't are just suffering from hysteresis—lag of apprehension. They think the library is what it was in 1850. They are behind the times.

Am I not afraid that if all the business men should press the button at once, the library would be swamped? There would be a little swearing at first, I fear. But ultimately there would be a realization that a library built and stocked and manned to serve perhaps 50 business men at once cannot serve 500 or 5000. There would be pressure on the legislature; we should have the necessary funds and

in short order we should be serving our 5000 as smoothly as we served our 50.

Now let us get down to something concrete. Just what information are we prepared to give to business and industrial houses? Here are some actual questions asked lately and answered in our reference departments—many of them by telephone:

The uses of lye in baking powder.
History and development of the plow.
Substitute for such commercial products as dyes, sealskin, fertilizers, etc.
Receipts for preparing in the wholesale manner mustard and salad-dressing, and for bottling olives.
Methods of installing a refrigerating plant.
Addresses of the manufacturers of toys in the United States.
How far from the curb may vehicles be parked in St. Louis.
Names of manufacturers of bottled buttermilk.
Dates of traffic legislation in England.
Names of the officers of the Wabash R.R.
How to calculate the depreciation in shop fittings in taking inventory.
Change in prices in Wall Street for the last year.
History of speculation in the 16th century.
Examination of the State Board of Pharmacy relating to the laws of the State of Missouri on the sale of narcotics.
Pictures for advertising posters, such as "a Pullman porter," "Hops," used in a Bevo ad.
"Two dogs playing" for the title-page of a piece of music entitled "Puppy love."
Designs for book-covers, posters, letter-heads, by the million.

I think I hear someone say—"Do you call that library work? One man at a telephone and a pile of circulars at the other end?" Yes. I do; didn't I tell you that libraries had changed? When Archbishop Glennon first visited our new building, he walked into the magnificent central hall and, looking around him said: "Where are the books?" The books were all in their places, but they were not in the delivery hall. The books in a library are quite as important as ever. There could be no library without them. They are the library. But we are laying more and more emphasis on the man behind the book. In nine cases out of ten he is a woman, and increasingly often he

is at the end of a telephone wire. We find that information slips over a telephone wire quite easily. It saves the business man an annoying trip and sometimes it saves our assistant from hearing all about the business man's last attack of sciatica. Not always; for sufferers have been known to seek sympathy even by telephone. The more they do it, the more trunk lines we have to pay for, so the telephone company doesn't mind.

But it is true that in meeting the business man's needs the library is assimilating itself more and more to a huge information bureau. This is the case especially at our Municipal Reference Branch in the City Hall, where we have few books, properly so called, many reports, pamphlets and clippings, properly indexed, and a great deal of manuscript material, gathered by correspondence in answer to queries and waiting for more queries on the same subject.

It matters little whether what you want is bound between covers, or slipped into a pamphlet case, or slipped into a manila envelope; it really matters little whether it is printed at all, so long as it is indexed so that it can be found quickly. We may perhaps look forward to the day when all the bound books in the library will be for home use, and will give information at second hand, too late for the business man to act promptly on it. The real sources of up to date knowledge will be, as they often are now, manuscript letters, circulars, newspaper clippings and trade catalogs. With their inevitable index they form a huge encyclopedia, absolutely up to date.

The printed cyclopedia in umpty-seven volumes is lucky if it catches up with year before last; it may do for your private library where the skilful agent has induced you to put it, but it is worthless in the Business Man's collection, except on the rare occa-

sions when he wants the life of Epictetus or the location of the Dobrudja. For the Business Man we want this morning's material. Shall we deny it, collectively, the name of a library just because the bookbinder has not been at work on it, and in many cases will never get the chance?

Not that the Business Man may not read books if he wants them—books on commerce, the industries, transportation, salesmanship, advertising, accounting. He may have them sent to his home if he likes, with no more trouble than sitting down again to his telephone. We use Uncle Sam's messenger service—his parcel post. The only annoying thing about it is that he will not deliver C. O. D. and we are accordingly forced to ask for a postage deposit in advance—anything you choose, from the postage on one book one way to several dollars. We will notify you when the money is used up. This combination of telephone and parcel post seems to me the ideal of library service when you can name the book you want and don't care to be merely browsing along the shelves. If the book is out, you will be put on the waiting list and will get it automatically when your turn comes. Why does not every citizen of St. Louis avail himself of this easy service? Hysteresis, I suppose; thinking of the old library of 1850 and neglecting that of 1917. Or perhaps it is that provoking little advance payment. Pay beforehand may be a poor paymaster, but those who work with Uncle Sam have to make his acquaintance.

So much for the information to be obtained from the library by business men. You are advertising men. Your business is the dissemination of information. Your boast is that it is your business to tell the truth, and I believe it. How can the Library help you tell it? Well—I believe the Library to be the

greatest publicity field in the world—largely a virgin field, for you men, like everybody else, have got the hysteresis—you are suffering from brain lag—not brain fag. You think the library is back where it was in 1850, when it was the last place in the world where any sane man would go for publicity. It was a good place to hide. They tell the story of a library in Philadelphia, a beautiful old mausoleum, where an escaped criminal once stayed in its public reading room for three days before the police found him. We don't covet that reputation. The modern library, I repeat, is the very best publicity field in the world. First, as we have seen, it is absolutely non-partisan. If you get your publicity material into the library it is because the library thinks it is good for something, not because you have some kind of a pull. Next, the people who frequent the library are intelligent. Publicity there is like that obtained from a high-class periodical: it is gilt-edged. Last and not least, the publicity given by the library is incidental. It accepts your publicity material and makes it available, not because it wants to boom your product at the expense of some other, but because it thinks that your material contains something of value to the business man. In most cases its publicity is general, not specific. You know that splendid Eastman ad—"There's a photographer in your town." That makes a thrill run down my spine whenever I see it, just as Tschaikovsky's Sixth symphony does or Homer's description of Ulysses fighting the Cyclops; and for the same reason—it is a product of genius.

Advertising is more and more bending this way. Why couldn't we have seen it before? For the same reason that we can't all write plays like Shakespeare's or compose Wagner's operas. When two shoemakers, Smith and Jones, had little shops opposite each other,

Smith's chief idea of advertising was to tell what trash Jones was making, and Jones's to assure people that nothing good could come out of Smith's store. What was the result? The same that induced the darky to say after he had heard the political orators: "If bofe dese fellers tells de trufe, what a pair of rascals they must be!" The net effect was to put people's minds on the worthlessness of the product, instead of its excellence. Nowadays Smith and Jones are getting together, even if they haven't been gobbled up by the Trust, and are assuring people that shoes are good things to have—that we ought to wear more of them; more kinds and better quality. The result is to fix the public mind on the excellence of shoes and both Smith and Jones sell more of them than under the old method. The library is willing to boom shoes for you, and labor-saving machinery, and food-products, and textiles and seeds, and lighting and heating devices. It does this to some extent without your co-operation, by the books that it places on the shelves; but no one who knows will go to a book for up-to-date information of this sort. If you want a description of the very latest device for any purpose, go to the publicity material of the concern that makes it.

We trust to you ad-men and your campaign for truth in advertising, that it is no fake. Here is where you can help us and help your clients by so doing. We stock every bit of good, informative publicity that we can find. We miss much of it. You can help us get it all. Your clients will get more publicity and better publicity for nothing than they have often bought for hundreds of dollars. Perhaps it is another effect of hysteresis that makes us afraid of anything that is offered free. You remember the story of the man who all day long, on a bet, offered sover-

eigns unsuccessfully in exchange for shillings on London Bridge.

If we were allowed to charge for our privileges I believe we could turn ourselves into a money-making institution on this count of publicity alone. I believe that it would be profitable for publishers to pay us for putting their books on our shelves. If we charged for the space we are giving to trade catalogs, circulars and other publicity material the issuers, I am sure, would not wait for us to ask for what they print. We have been trying for several years to get framed pictures of St. Louis industries to hang in our Business and Industrial Room. If we had asked $50 per, for the privilege of using space on the walls of a public institution I am sure we could have had it. But since we offer that space absolutely free of charge—a sovereign for a shilling—we can't get what we want.

This is special publicity too, not general. There are some other cases where something about a piece of special publicity makes it so valuable to us that we display it, letting the advertiser get his advantage as a side issue. Within the last few years we have put up boldly in our art room, big glaring poster ads of beer, cigars and breakfast foods. How much could one of you have extorted from an advertiser if you had made him believe that you had some kind of a pull that would enable you to placard his wares not on Smith's fence or Jones's barn, but actually on the inside of the St. Louis Public Library? Now these posters were displayed, of course, not as inducements to smoke Fatimas or to drink Satanet, but because they were good and interesting commercial art. We believe that more people see the art on the fences than that in the Art Museum, and we want to do our part toward making it good. It has made great strides of

late, as I think you will acknowledge. But answer me this: was not that valuable publicity for these products? Will not the knowledge that similar publicity may await the manufacturer who gets out a good poster, work out to the advantage of all concerned?

You know those articles in *System*, of course, telling what the writer would do if he were an undertaker, or a druggist, or a farmer. Well, if I were an ad-man I would get up an exhibition of St. Louis-made commercial art, advertising St. Louis products, and offer it to the Public Library. We will display it, our only condition in each case being that it is artistically worth display. Your clients will have their products advertised gratis, in a place where space could not be bought for a million dollars a square foot. You will gain in reputation as a man who puts over big things: we shall get an interesting display of commercial art, and better than all else, an impulse will have been given toward improved quality in the poster art of St. Louis. This is only one instance of the fact, which I believe to be a fact, that there is almost no kind of advertising that cannot be done in a live, modern public library, if one only goes the right way about it. Many go about it quite the wrong way, and do not succeed.

We do not assist Mrs. Smith to get piano pupils by placing on our bulletin boards a scrawled announcement. We are not willing to distribute by the million, small dodgers announcing that Jones's clothes-wringers are the best. We do not allow Robinson to lecture in one of our assembly rooms in order to form a class in divine healing from which he, and he alone, will profit.

Publicity furnished by us must be incidental, as I have said; or it must be general, but I believe it to

be all the more effective for this, and I invite your attempts to make more frequent and better use of it in such ways as I have suggested. Study the business and industrial material in our Applied Science Room, or the commercial art material in our Art Room. Examine the collection of travel folders on display in our delivery hall. See our bulletin of daily attractions in St. Louis, entered months ahead when we can get the information—and see whether you do not agree with me.

Now let me remind you that you are paying for all this service, whether you make use of it or not. You are members of the best club in St. Louis. I don't mean the Advertising Men's Club, good as that is; I mean the Library Club. The taxgatherer collects the dues: if you are not a taxpayer you pay just the same, the burden being passed along to you in some of the many ways familiar to economists. The dues amount to about three cents a month for each inhabitant of St. Louis—not excessive. The club has the finest club house in the city, the most comfortable reading and study rooms, the finest and most useful books, the most intelligent and helpful attendants. You may have to belong to other clubs that you do not use; this, at least it would be folly to neglect.

POETS, LIBRARIES AND REALITIES*

We are met to dedicate a temple of the Book on the birthday of a man who did more than any other American, perhaps, to bring the book to the hearts of the masses. All poetry, all song, begins with the people, in the mouths of humble singers. Elaboration, refinement, unintelligent imitation, carry them both away from popular appreciation, until finally someone like James Whitcomb Riley brings them back. Great poetry is always about familiar things. Homeric epics tell of the kind of fighting that every Greek knew at first hand. The shepherds and shepherdesses of the earliest pastorals were the everyday workers of the fields. It was only at a later day the epic and pastoral grew artificial because the poets did their best to keep them unchanged while the things of which they told had passed away. Only when the poets forget the stilted symbols which once were real and discover that they themselves are surrounded by realities worthy of verse does poetry again become popular. It is this phenomenon that we are witnessing today.

Everyone who has had occasion to keep in touch with popular taste will tell you that the increased love for poetry shown in the publication of verse, the purchase of it, the study of it, the demand for it at public libraries, is nothing less than astounding. That this represents any sudden change in the public, I cannot believe. The public has always loved verse. The child chants it in his games; he drinks it

* Address at the opening of the new building of the Indianapolis Public Library.

in greedily at his mother's knee. He begs for it, even when he cannot understand it, just for the joy of its rhythm, its lilt. But when the great poets go to the abodes of the gods, or to regions as far away in esthetics or metaphysics, for their subjects, they carry their product beyond public appeal. When our great verse is all remote and the familiar things are left to folk-lore and rag-time, then folk-lore and rag-time will monopolize public attention and fill the heart of the people. It is this feeling, on the part of many poets, that the familiar things of life are beneath their notice, that has made poetry so long unpopular. The feeling is quite unjustified. All the great elemental things are also among the most familiar—birth, death, love, grief, joy, in human experience: in the outer world, day and night, winter and summer, storm, wind and flood. And affiliated with these are all the little everyday things of which Riley sings—the bathing urchins, the ragged farm hand, the old tramp, the little orphan girl with her tales of fright, the rabbit under the railroad ties. When the modern reader first read in verse about such things there was a rush of red blood to the heart, with a recognition of the fact that verse had come down from Olympus to earth, and that after all, earth is where we live and that life and its emotions and events are both important and poetical.

I am not denying the poetry of romance, but we should remember that this too, has its roots in reality. Even the most imaginative works must be based, in the last analysis, on the real. Take for instance such works as Poe's. Poe despised realism. His best work is about half imagination and half form. Yet when he succeeds in rousing in us the mingled emotions of fear and horror on which so many of his effects depend he is using for his purposes what was

once a defensive mechanism of the human organism, causing it to shrink from and avoid the real things—wild beasts, enemies, the forces of nature—that were striving continually to overwhelm and destroy it. Without the survival of this defensive mechanism of fear and horror, Poe's tales would have no dominion over the human mind. In fact, the main difference between what we call realism and romanticism is that while both have their relations with the real facts of life, the facts on which romanticism depends are unfamiliar, distant and distorted, while realism deals with that which is near at hand and familiar. Knights in armor, distressed damsels, donjon keeps and forests of spears were once as everyday affairs as aeroplanes are now, or gas attacks, or the British tanks. These all have in them the elements of romance; and when they too have passed, as God grant they may, they will doubtless take their place in the equipment of the poetical romanticist. Not these realities that pass, but those that are with us always, are the ones that inspire verse like Riley's.

Those who love to study group-psychology, and who realize that we have in the motion-picture audience one of the most wonderful places to observe it that ever has been vouchsafed to mortals, may see every night the hold that this kind of realism has over the popular mind. Armed hosts may surge across the screen, volcanoes may belch and catastrophe may be piled on catastrophe. The eyes of the spectators may bulge and their mouths may gape, but they remain untouched. But let a little dog appear with his tongue out and his tail awag; let a small babe lie in its cradle and double up its tiny fists and yell, and at once you have evidence that the picture has penetrated the skin of the house and got down to the quick. Homely realities make an appeal

that neither the knights in armor of the fourteenth century nor the tanks in armor of the twentieth are able to exert. Gilbert, who wrote many a truth in the guise of jest, never said a truer thing than when he made Bunthorne proclaim that in all Nature's works "something poetic lurks"—

Even in Colocynth and Calomel.

That is the poet's mission—to show us the poetry in the things that we had never looked upon as within poetry's sphere. They are all doing it now—Noyes, Masefield and all the rest, and the public has risen at them as one man.

If James Whitcomb Riley were here today I should take him by the hand and say, "Beloved poet, you have known how to touch the great heart of the people quickly and deeply. That is what we must all do, if we are to succeed. We librarians must do it if our libraries are to be more than paper and glue and leather. Teach us the way."

Our libraries are closer, far closer, to the people today than they were fifty years ago. They can never get as close as an individual voice like Riley's, for they are a combination, not even a harmonious chorus, but a jumble of sounds from all regions and all ages. Yet we must not forget that in every instrument of music there is a potential mass of discord. The skilled player selects his tones and produces them in proper sequence and rhythm; and lo! a sweet melody! So the librarian may play upon his mass of books, selecting and grouping and bringing into correspondence his own tones and the receptive minds of his community, until every man sees in the library not a jumble but a harmony, not a promoter of intellectual confusion but a clarifier of ideas. In some such fashion it is allowed him to get close to

the minds and hearts of his community as Riley did to his readers.

We are realizing today, we of the library world, that it is a poor instrument that yields but one tune, and a poor player who is able to produce only one. The librarians of the early days were of this kind; so were their libraries. The tune they played was the tune of scholarship—a grand old melody enough, and yet with the right keyboard one may play not only fugues and chorals but the waltz and even the one-step. The scholar will find his refuge in this great building, but here also will be a multitude of functions undreamt of in the early library day—the selection of literature for children and their supervision while they use it, co-operation with the schools, the training of library workers, the publication of lists and other library aids, helpful cataloging and indexing, the provision of books and assistance for special classes, such as engineers, business men or teachers, a staff and facilities for all kinds of extension work, filling the space around the library as a magnet's field of force surrounds its material body. A modern library is a city's headquarters in its strife against ignorance and inefficiency; its working force is a general staff—books, ammunition for the fighter and food for the worker.

Of the poet I have said that his ability to gain the public ear and to reach the public heart is closely bound up with the portrayal of realities. This is true also of the library. Every step of its progress from a merely scholarly institution to a widely popular one has been marked by the introduction of more red blood, more real life, into its organism. The frequenter of the older library went there to find books on the pure sciences, on philosophy, in the

drama, in poetry. These we of today in no wise neglect, but we entertain also those who look for books on plumbing, on the manufacture of hats, shoes and clothing, on salesmanship and cost accounting, on camping and fishing, on first aid to the injured, on the products of Sonoma county, California. Our assistants take over the telephone requests to furnish the population of Bulgaria, the average temperature of Nebraska in the month of June, plans for bungalows not to cost more than $1750, pictures of the Winter Palace in Petrograd, sixty picture postals of Baltimore for a reflectoscope lecture, a copy of a poem beginning "O beauteous day!" the address of the speaker's uncle who left Salem, Massachusetts, for the West twenty-six years ago. Everyone of these queries throbs with the red blood of reality. Few of them would have been considered within the library's scope fifty years ago. Books are written nowadays about all such subjects, whereas in the earlier day the knowledge of these things and the ability to write of them did not reside in the same person. So the library's progress toward the realities is but the expression of that same progress in literature, using the word in its widest sense to signify all that may lurk between the covers of a book. The contemptuous name of *biblia abiblia*—books that are no books—which the earlier writers bestowed upon dictionaries, directories, indexes, lists and the like, is disregarded by the modern librarian. He prizes a list of all the grocers in the United States; he points with pride to his collection of hundreds of telephone directories; he has names galore in alphabetical array—indexes to places, persons, pictures, events and books. All these things are as much a part of his library as the Iliad of Homer or the dramas of Calderon.

But the librarian does not stop here. He con-

ceives that it is his duty to deal not only with books but with what we may call adjuncts to books—things which may lead to books those who do not read—things that may interpret books to those who read but do not read understandingly or appreciatively. Some of our brothers beyond the sea have criticized us American librarians for the freedom—nay, the abandon—with which we have thrown ourselves into the search for such adjuncts and the zeal with which we have striven to make use of them. It has been our aim of late years, for instance, to make of the library a community center—to do everything that will cause its neighbors to feel that it is a place where they will be welcome, for whatever cause and that they may look to it for aid, sympathy and appreciation in whatever emergency. If the life of the community thus centers in the library, we have felt that the community cannot fail ultimately to take an interest in the library's contents and in its primary function. The branch libraries in many of our cities are such local centers. Here one may find the neighbors round about holding an exhibition of needlework, the children dancing, the young men debating questions of the day, the women's clubs discussing their programs, the local musical society rehearsing a cantata, Sunday schools preparing for a festival, the ward meeting of a political party. In one of our own branch libraries, in a well-to-do neighborhood, the librarian said to one of the young men at a social meeting, "I am curious to know why you come here. You could all afford, I know, to rent a larger and better hall; or you could meet in your own homes." The young man looked at her with surprise, "Why," he said, "we like this place. We all grew up in this library." I confess that this anecdote sends a little thrill of satisfaction

thru me every time I tell it. What could a librarian desire more than to have his neighborhood "grow up" in his library—to have the books as their roommates—to feel that they would rather be in that one spot than any other? On what a point of vantage does this place him! How much more readily will his neighbors listen to the good genius of a much-loved spot than to the keeper of a jail! Just here, of course, is the strong point of the so-called Gary system, which has so much in common with our modern library ideas. Whatever may be its faults, it at least makes of the school what we librarians have long sought to make of the library—a place that will be loved by its inmates instead of loathed. This once gained there is hardly any result that we may not bring about.

And now let us consider at least one thing more that we may gain from this intimate contact with the life of the community around us.

Formalism has been the death of art, of literature, of science, in many an age. It has atrophied an entire civilization, as it did in China. It paralyzed Egyptian art; it would have paralyzed Greek art, if the Greeks had not had the vitality to throw it off. Art, literature and science are never sufficient unto themselves. They must all drink continually at the fresh springs of reality. To move up to date with our metaphor, they must all get fresh current from the feeders of nature if the trolley wire is to be kept "live" and the motor running. Those perennial currents that Ampere conceived of as chasing themselves round and round the molecules of matter could keep going only in the absence of resistance, and that is something that we may imagine or talk about, but that does not really exist. Every electric current will stop unless a continuous electro-motive force is behind

it; every river will dry up unless fed by living springs. All art, all literature, all science, will shrivel out of existence, or at any rate out of usefulness, if those who practice it think that all they have to do is to copy some trick, some method, some symptom perhaps of real genius, of their predecessors. Aristotle was a real scientist, tho his outlook was not ours. But those who kept on copying Aristotle for centuries and would not believe what they saw with their own eyes unless they could confirm it with a passage from his writings—they were no scientists at all. We have recovered from their formalism as Greek art recovered from the formalism of the lions of Mycenae.

Who shall say that James Whitcomb Riley did not do just this when he chose to abandon the stock in trade of the standard poets and put into verse what he saw about him here in Indiana? It is not beyond the possibilities, of course, that his own fresh point of view may one day succumb to formalism—that his little Orphant Annies and his raggedy men may become familiar to posterity through the work of a school of copyists who prefer to write about an Indiana that they never saw in a period when they never lived, instead of going themselves to the fresh inspiration of the realities about them. Now, of course, the current or the river of art or poetry must run a little while by itself; it cannot be all spring. Only, the fresh inspiration must not be delayed too long, lest the current or the river be dried.

In a recent article on current British novelists, one of our own most gifted writers, Mrs. Gerould, says with some truth that the stories of the younger realists in England—Compton Mackenzie, Oliver Onions, Hugh Walpole, Gilbert Cannan and their kin—are so similar in subject, treatment and style, that they might almost be interchangeable. She wittily de-

velops the idea of a syndicate—the British Novelists, Limited—in which one writer is told to do the descriptions, another the character-drawing and a third the thrills. Mrs. Gerould is hardly fair here. These young men are almost the first writers in the English language to do just what they are accomplishing. They are by turns engrossing and boresome, but they are like the boy who has, all by himself, picked out a succession of chords on the piano. The harmony thrills him, but he is in danger of keeping it up so long that he will drive his hearers daft. When our British realists have over-worked their new vein, their sales will fall off and their publishers will see that fresh ore is brought to light ere more of their work reaches the public. How shall we ensure that this new ore shall be at hand—the jungle cleared so that there may be a fresh vista?

I may be taking too much upon my chosen profession; but I cannot help thinking that this is one of the tasks with which we librarians shall have to grapple. We have ourselves, as we have seen, come lately into more intimate touch with the realities about us. Can we not put into literature what we are taking from life and so act as the feeders that shall keep civilization from drying up or turning to stone? This is perhaps a startling idea. A book is a record. In the nature of things there is no progress in a record. And we are the keepers of the records of civilization; how then shall we be also founts of inspiration?

In this way; records stand, but the things that they record progress. We must go to the library to find out where humanity stands on the road and what lies before us. If our public comes to us naturally to read these records and if our writers know this and write for a public interested in reality, the library has done its part. Before this linkage can function

truly, we must have authors who realize that there is a special library public and who write for it. We are told that the English publishers, before they accept a manuscript ask, "How many will the circulating libraries take?" They mean the great commercial subscription libraries like Mudie's and Smith's. The patronage of these libraries is more important to them than that of the public at large, or at any rate, they feel that they can rely upon it as an indication of what that of the public at large will be. There is a library public that they recognize and respect. We have nothing in the United States to correspond to Mudie's and Smith's. Our great circulating libraries are our free public libraries. Do authors or publishers or booksellers recognize the public library as a force to be reckoned with, either apart from other readers or as indicative of what other readers will think or do? I once made an investigation of this question and I was compelled to acknowledge, as I am still forced to admit, that there is no such recognition. Neither author nor publisher consciously does anything different, because there are public library readers, from what he would do, if all our public libraries were wiped off the face of the earth. My hope for the future lies in a justified suspicion that though neither is consciously affected, both do recognize the library public unconsciously and indirectly. Both would admit that their output has been affected by the great extension of the reading public and its consequent alteration in quality. A discussion of the exact effect would lead us too far afield. The point is that the literary product has been changed by a change in the numbers and quality of the reading public, and that this change has been brought about in no small degree by the establishment and popularity of public libraries. Possibly it is not too much to

expect that this unconscious recognition will give place to a conscious one, and that the producers' mutual influence bring each other into more frequent contact with reality.

Now, there may be some here who, wondering at my classification of the Hoosier poet, are saying to themselves, "Was Riley also among the Realists?" And I ask in turn, why has Realism come to connote a proportion of things that do not enter at all into the lives of most of us? We have all known and loved the old swimmin' hole; how many of us are familiar with the man who commits suicide, not to end an intolerable situation, not in a frenzy of grief or remorse, but just to see what will happen? Yet when a Russian writes about such anomalies as this our critics say, "What wonderful realism!" If realism is anything, it must surely be real. There is morbidity in life; we cannot avoid it or overlook it. But is there anything in life that corresponds to ninety-nine per cent of morbidity? Not in my life, nor in yours. For you and for me, Riley is a realist. God forbid that he may ever be anything else.

There is something in the situation of this city in which we are assembled, that encourages men to look life straight in the face. Those who dwell amid rocky heights and caverns may be excused for looking behind them when they walk and for trembling at shadows. The sailor between whom and eternity there stands only a two-inch plank may live largely among unrealities. But the man of the open prairie, with God's solid earth stretching away north, south, east and west, and God's free air above and about him, stands firmly and sees clearly. What interests him is the present and its necessary relationships with the future, with only so much of the past as is

able to consolidate these relationships and illumine them. Here, as one would expect, is growing up a school of representative artists, working some with the pen and others with the brush, whose aim and whose high privilege it is to record those relationships on canvas and on the printed page, each in his own fashion, of course, for a love for the outer realities can never do away with that supreme inner reality, a man's own self that which looks out upon the world and sees that world through its own spectacles. It is the triumph of all art that faithfully as it may represent what it sees, its representations will still be, in large part, functions of the artist's own mood, so that the same scene, the same event, portrayed by different writers or different painters, may arouse in us emotions as varied as joy, grief or mere restfulness. And of course, although we may praise James Whitcomb Riley portraying what he saw about him there would be little to praise if he were not at the same time portraying James Whitcomb Riley and if that portrayal were not worth while.

I like to think that what we librarians are doing is in some measure akin to the work of the artists of pen or brush, though perhaps in a secondary way. The writer interprets reality; we interpret the writers themselves. Here is a case where we cannot have too many middlemen, for each, instead of piling up cost to the consumer, piles up the value of the product. How many men could sit in a country churchyard at evening and see unaided what Gray saw? Gray in his Elegy records that churchyard and himself as well. But how many men does Gray fail to reach? How many, whom he would rejoice or comfort, never heard him? And to Gray, in this query, let us add

the names of all the good and great in literature. Here is where the librarian steps in. He presents Gray and Gray's fellow artists in words, to his public.

Years ago the library was merely a storehouse and the librarian the custodian thereof. Today the library is a magazine of dynamic force and the librarian is the man who exerts and directs it—who persuades the community that it needs books and then satisfies that need, instead of waiting for the self-realization which too often will never come. Does not the librarian in some fashion interpret life and nature to his public, through books in general, even as the writer interprets them through one particular book?

This may seem fantastic, but I like to think that it is true. The October air in these autumn days is full of megaphonic voices, each insisting on its right to be heard above all the others. We are urged to enlist in the British army, to buy Liberty bonds, to build huts for the Y.M.C.A. and the Knights of Columbus, to work for the Red Cross, to buy tobacco for the soldiers, and at the same time to support all our local charities and pay our club dues as usual, not neglecting to respond to the calls of the tax collector. We librarians have ourselves used the megaphone to some purpose, having as you know, raised a million dollars, to establish and maintain camp libraries, giving our soldiers the same public library facilities that they enjoy at home.

But in the midst of all this distracting chorus let us not forget that our normal lives must function as usual, despite the abnormalities that surround and interpenetrate them. The opening of this noble library building and the character of this assembly are proofs that we intend to live as usual, even amid so much that is unusual.

I see no limit to the usefulness of this building

and of the institution whose home it is to be. The house is new but its occupant has been long and favorably known to your citizens. Indianapolis has library traditions, and is what we librarians call a "good library town." Your library has had good leadership and it is to continue, adding the force and freshness of the new to the strength and experience of the old. The memory of your dearly loved poet will be brought to the mind of each library user—by the children's room that bears his name, by the land that he gave to enlarge its site, by this enduring portraiture—by a thousand and one things, none the less cogent for being intangible. I look to see this library, in the home city of James Whitcomb Riley, grow into a place in the public heart comparable with that which was attained by Riley himself. It should be loved for its broad minded humanity, for its sympathy with mankind, especially with little children, for its readiness to "rejoice with those that do rejoice and weep with those that weep," for its quick response to the personal and spiritual needs of every reader, and above all for its firm hold on the realities of life and its appreciation of life as something that is lived on the farm, in the city street, in the office, the school and the club, not in the clouds, not in fog and mist, not with the improbable or the impossible. That it will do and be all these things we may be confident. Riley the well beloved is gone. His memory lives on; let it live with peculiar force and vividness in this library, in its attitude toward those whom it serves—in the affection which they in turn feel toward an institution that has long been, and will long continue to be a center of literary, civic and intellectual force in the city where Riley lived and wrote.

THE CHURCH AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

The years immediately succeeding the great war are to witness great progress in team-work. The war is teaching us to get together, and it is impossible to believe that the lessons we are now learning will be suddenly and totally forgotten with the advent of peace. The world is full of institutions, associations, corporate bodies of all kinds, founded on a knowledge of what may be accomplished by the cooperation of individuals; but the cooperation of these bodies themselves, one with another, has been faulty until recently.

The public library is cooperative in its very essence. Its business is to help others. Were there no public for it to serve, its very necessity for existence would go. In the older days it merely sat with folded hands, ready to serve. Of later years it has become a compelling force, reaching out into the community by a thousand tendrils and attaching them to whatever individual, or body of individuals, seems to be in need —often without knowing it—of library service. The public library's relations with the schools, with the business man, with the industries, with the military service—you will find these all discust over and over again, not only in the technical magazines devoted to library work, but in the public press.

And yet we look in vain for a discussion of the public library's relations with the Church. Why is this? The Church itself is in the cooperative class with the library. It exists to help mankind. Without

a humanity to help, and a humanity weak and fallible enough to need help, its mission would be over. In studying this question I find an unaccountable timidity on both sides. On the one hand, librarians and libraries seem to be shy of religion. They rarely purchase religious books in any systematic way. They are afraid of denominational literature, both books and periodicals, apparently on the ground that those presenting the view of one religious body might be objected to by other bodies. Some libraries refuse to subscribe for any denominational papers, but will accept them as gifts. Many libraries refuse to allow the holding of religious meetings in their buildings, probably for a similar reason.

On the other hand, the churches, as churches, seem often to ignore the existence of the public library, even when their members use it constantly. They maintain libraries of their own in their Sunday-schools, for their young people, and these libraries, I am sorry to say, are often far below standard! They rarely show interest in the public library's collection of books, not seeming to care whether the library does or does not contain their own denominational literature.

There are some noteworthy exceptions. The Roman Catholics are aware of the library and seem to appreciate its value as a publicity agent and an educator. They are concerned when it contains books of which they disapprove, and are anxious to put on its shelves works that will interest their own people. Of late they have published in several of our large cities lists of books in the public library written by their coreligionists, or, for some reason of special interest to them. These lists have usually been prepared with the assistance of the library staff and paid for and distributed either by a special committee or by some

denominational body such as the Knights of Columbus. That they have a sympathetic attitude toward the library is shown not only by these facts, but by the fact that libraries in several cities, organized specifically as church libraries, have been turned over to the local public library as branches.

Another religious body that appreciates the aid of the public library is that of the Christian Scientists. This Church has committees specially charged with seeing that public libraries are supplied, free of charge, with its literature.

During the present Luther anniversary there has been some activity on the part of the Lutheran churches to see that libraries are supplied with material bearing on their organization and doctrines. With these exceptions I have not met, during my library experience of a quarter of a century with the slightest interest on the part of religious bodies regarding the book-collection of a public library—either about what it contained or what it did not contain. Occasionally, however, a church library has been transformed into a public library branch. In New York there are three branches that began their existence as parish libraries of Protestant Episcopal churches. Doubtless there are instances in other cities of which I have no knowledge.

I am sure that more active cooperation between the public library and the various religious bodies would benefit both and, through them, the public. In the first place, the library should devote more attention to its collection of religious books, and it would do so if those interested showed their interest actively. There is much material of great value to teachers in Sunday-schools that should find a resting-place in the library. In a town where there are, say, a dozen Sunday-schools, it may be quite impossible for

each to buy several sets of commentaries, concordances, works of travel and description, &c., but they might well club together for the purchase of this material and give it to the library or deposit it there, where it would be at the service of all. In larger towns, where the library fund is greater, united effort on the part of the churches would doubtless result in the expenditure of part of the book-money for this purpose. Librarians are anxious to serve the public. If they can be shown that the public wants books of one kind rather than another they are only too glad to respond. They do not like to buy books in the dark, but the apparent indifference of the public often forces them to do so.

Such works as these are of common interest to all Christians. But in addition every library ought to contain a certain amount of denominational material. The library is not, except possibly for some occasional reason, interested in propaganda, but facts about the Methodists or the Baptists are surely of as much value, and should be preserved with as much care, as facts about a constitutional convention in Nebraska or the proceedings of a plumbers' association in Salem, Mass. Every good library should have one standard work on the history of each of the prominent religious denominations, especially those that are strong in its home town. It should include the biographies of its principal divines and laymen. There should be also its year-book, renewed annually, its official confession of faith and statement of organization, its liturgy, if it has one, its official collection of hymns. Its chief periodical should be on file.

I do not know of any library that makes a specialty of obtaining this material and seeing that it is all up-to-date. Most librarians would exclaim that their meager funds would not stand the strain, and that,

besides, there has never been the slightest demand for such material. There is a demand for all the latest novels by Harold Bell Wright, Robert W. Chambers, and Marie Corelli, and so these are purchased. Here is where the indifference of most of our religious bodies toward what the library does or does not contain is bearing legitimate fruit.

Does your public library contain reference-material that is of interest, or ought to be of interest, to your co-religionists? If not, whose fault is it? Extending our inquiry beyond reference-material, we may next assert that there are many semipopular books of a denominational character, sermons by a favorite divine, advice to young people, words of comfort to those in trouble, which it is to the interest of Christian people to see more widely read. The libraries will never waste their money in the purchase of these if they are to remain idly on the shelves. They will buy freely in response to a demand. Whose fault is it that the demand does not materialize?

I have said that such a demand might easily divert part of the library's book-fund now devoted to other purchases. But the churches could afford to buy these books and present them to the library if they would cease to duplicate the library's work in directions where such duplication is useless. Why should a Sunday-school library buy stories, for old or young? There was good reason for it in the day, now far distant, when the public library was non-existent and the Sunday-school was the only general source of decent books. Even in that day the Sunday-school library largely bought trash—the kind of wishy-washy, mock-pious stuff turned out by hack-writers at the rate of several volumes per day.

The rapid rise of the public library is doubtless due, in part, to the neglect of its early opportunities

by the Sunday-school library. But no one can say that the public library has not risen to the occasion. The very best part of its collection, the most carefully selected, the most conscientiously distributed, is that which contains its books for children. We have schools for the training of children's librarians, and we give their graduates special charge of rooms for children in our library buildings. There is no reason now why any church should maintain a library of general literature for any purpose whatever.

I have alluded above to the library's value as a publicity agent. As a matter of fact, both the Church and the library are the greatest and most valuable means of publicity that we have. Both are unpurchasable. Both reach selected elements of the community, partly the same, partly different. To have an event announced from the pulpit, especially with commendation, gives it a prestige that it could attain in no other way. Similarly, to have something published on the library's bulletin-boards, or on slips inserted in each circulated book, or in any one of a dozen ways that have been practised by libraries gives publicity of high value. Both the pulpit and the library utilize these methods for themselves and often for outside bodies, but not often for each other. It is rare for a clergyman to mention the public library from his pulpit, altho it is occasionally done. It is also rare, tho not totally unknown, for a library to give publicity to a church in any of the ways that are proper for this to be done.

In particular, every library, especially in a small city where there is no local guide-book, should be a repository of local religious information. Any one should be able, not only to ascertain there the location of any particular church, but to consult its literature, if it issues any; if not, to find on file authentic information about it corresponding to that usually

put into print—the names of officers, a list of parish organizations, &c. Such things can be had for the asking, and there is usually no one place in a town where they are all assembled. There should be such a place, and that place may well be the public library. Large libraries quite generally collect this material; the smaller ones should follow suit. They will be apt to do so if the church people manifest an interest. If the collection and continual "following up" of the material involve more work than the smaller staff of the library can do, it ought to be easy to divide it among volunteers from the different congregations, this being the church's part of this particular item of cooperation.

It is safe to say that the Church and the public library may help each other in at least six ways:

1. The substitution of the library's children's room for the Sunday-school library in the purveying of general literature.

2. The more careful and more generous provision of religious books in the library, with increased interest on the part of the church in the character of this part of the collection.

3. The offer by the library of facilities for religious meetings.

4. Utilization of religious gatherings in the church to call attention to the library and its willingness to aid and advise.

5. Publicity given in and by the library to the churches and their work.

6. Publicity given in and by the Church to the library and its work.

As a basis on which cooperation of these and other kinds is to rest there must be personal acquaintance and confidence between the clergy and the librarian. This is something of which increase will bring further

increase, as in the accretions to a rolling snowball. For instance, the pastor of a church must have a certain degree of confidence in the librarian's good-will and ability to venture to recommend the purchase of a book; the librarian must have the same to be willing to entertain and act upon such a recommendation. But the contact once made, the book once bought, there is ground for increased confidence and acquaintance and for additional advice, and so it goes.

It will be noted that this counsel lays a greater burden on the librarian than on the clergy. It is no great task for any clergyman to make the acquaintance of the librarian; it is quite another thing for the librarian to do the same by each and every clergyman in his city. If the city is large and the clergy of various denominations are numbered by thousands, it is practically impossible. Recognizing this fact, the clergy should take some steps toward making collective take the place of individual acquaintance. They should invite the librarian to their meetings and he on his part should be ready to attend and to address them if requested to do so.

It should hardly be necessary to warn both parties to such cooperation as this, that the obtrusion of considerations of personal advantage, where this conflicts with public service, will be fatal to its success. For instance, a clergyman who is preparing an address on some rather unusual subject must not expect the librarian of a small city to expend public money for books which will aid him, and him alone, in his work. Fortunately, this particular issue can generally be avoided, owing to the growth of facilities for interlibrary loans. Altho the librarian might properly refuse to buy these particular books, he would doubtless offer to attempt to borrow them from some larger library, and this attempt would have a good chance of

success. Interlibrary service of this kind is bound to increase largely in the future and offers a most promising field for the rendering of aid by the smaller libraries to the scholar, literary worker, and investigator, including, of course, the clergyman.

The getting-together of public library and church has possibly been hampered in the past by an idea, common to both librarian and clergyman, that religious bodies and their work ought to be ignored by all public bodies, and that this is in some way a part of our American system of government and public administration. It is, of course, a feature of that administration to treat all religious bodies with absolute impartiality; but that does not involve ignoring their existence any more than treating all citizens with impartiality involves the ignoring of the individual. One way of being impartial, of course, is to turn one's back equally upon all, but that is not the only way. One may treat one's children alike by starving all of them equally, but our idea of impartial treatment would be better satisfied by an equality of adequate supplies.

It is time that the public library and the Church stopt the starvation treatment and began to mete out to each other a supply of the aid and good-will that each has at its disposal. Each has its fight to make against the forces of darkness; neither is in a position to neglect an ally.

THE FUTURE OF LIBRARY WORK

When a railroad train is on its way, its future history depends on which way it is heading, on its speed, and on whether its direction and its speed will remain unchanged. With these premises, one may confidently predict that a train which left Chicago at a given hour on one day will reach New York at a given hour on the next. Of course, something may happen to slow the train, or to wreck it, or even to send it back to Chicago, in which cases our predictions will come to naught. This is what the weather man finds. His predictions are based on very similar data. Our weather conditions travel usually across the continent from west to east at a fairly uniform rate. If that rate is maintained, and the direction does not change, and nothing happens to dissipate or alter the conditions, we can predict their arrival at a given place with a fair degree of accuracy. Those who rail at the weather man's mistakes are simply finding fault with our present inability to ascertain the causes that slow up storm centers, or swerve them in their course, or dissipate them. When we know these things, and know in addition what starts them, we can give up making forecasts and write out a pretty definite weather time-table—as definite and as little subject to change, at any rate, as those issued by the railroads.

My business at this moment is that of a forecaster. We know just where and what the library situation is at present, and some of us think we know where it is headed. If it should keep on in the same direction and at the same rate, we ought to be able to describe

it as it will be, say, in 1950. Of course, it may get headed in some other direction. It may slow down or speed up; it may melt away or strike a rock and be irrecoverably wrecked. If I see any chances of any of these things, it is my business to mention them. If my forecast should turn out a failure no one can prove it until 1950 arrives, and then I shall not care.

To begin with the necessary preliminaries of our forecast—what and where are we now? I have said that I know; probably you think that you do; but as a matter of fact our knowedge is neither comprehensive nor accurate. We need a general library survey. We have, as a sort of statistical framework, the figures now printed annually in tabular form in the A. L. A. Proceedings, but probably no one would maintain that these do, or possibly could, give an adequate idea of the character or extent of the work that our libraries are doing. Those of us who think we know something of it have gained our knowledge by experience and observation and neither is extensive enough in most cases to take the place of a well-considered and properly-managed survey of existing conditions and methods.

In default of a survey, we must, as I have said, fall back upon observation and experience. I can certainly claim no monopoly of these, and what I say in this regard is, of course, largely personal. But it seems to me that the distinguishing marks of library work, as at present conducted, include the following. As you will see, they are all connected and overlap more or less. They are all growth-products. They are:

1 Size and expense.
2 Socialization
3 Professionalization.
4 Popularization.
5 Nationalization.

First, library work in our country to-day is large and costly. Extensively it covers a great territory and reaches a huge population. Intensively it embraces a large variety of activities—many that one would hesitate, on general principles, to class as "library work."

Secondly, a large amount of this increase of activity has been of a kind that we are now apt to call "social." It deals with bodies or classes of people, and it tends to treat these people as the direct objects of the library's attention, instead of dealing primarily with books, as formerly, and only indirectly with their readers. In fact, the persons with whom the library now deals may not be readers at all, except potentially, as when they are users of club or assembly rooms.

Thirdly, librarians are beginning to think of themselves as members of a profession. At first sight this may seem to be a fact of interest only to library workers, and not at all to the public. Its significance may appear if we compare it to the emergence of the modern surgeon with his professional skill, traditions and pride, from the medieval barber who simply followed blood-letting as an avocation. Professionalism is a symptom of a great many things—of achievement and of consciousness of it and pride in it; of a desire to do teamwork and to maintain standards; to make sure that one's work is to be carried on and advanced by worthy successors.

Fourthly, libraries are now conducted for the many; not for the few. It is our aim to provide something for every one who can read, no matter of what age, sex, or condition. We do not even limit ourselves to readers, for we provide picture books for those who are too young to read. We are transferring the emphasis of our work from books to people. This characteristic is closely connected with what I have called

"socialization," but it is not the same thing. An institution may deal with all the people without dealing with them socially or in groups; and it may deal entirely with groups without dealing with everybody. The library now does both.

Fifthly, the library is now a national institution, at least in the same sense as is the public school. It is national in extent, national in consciousness, if not national in administration. Our own association has played its part in this development; the present war has given it a great stimulus. Those who see no nationalism without complete centralization and who say that we are not yet a nation because all our governmental powers are not centered at Washington, will doubtless deny the nationalization of the library. They take too narrow a view.

We may now combine two or more lines of inquiry. In what direction is the library moving in each of these respects? Is it speeding or slowing up? Is there any reason to look for speeding or slowing up in the future?

As regards size and cost, our development has been swift. We cannot, it seems to me, keep up the rate. Twenty years ago the institutions now constituting the New York Public Library circulated a million books. They now circulate ten million. Does anyone believe that twenty years hence they will circulate one hundred million? There must be further increase, because we are not now reaching every person and every class in the community, but it will not and cannot be a mere increase of quantity. We must do our work better and make every item and element in it tell. We must substitute one book well read for ten books skimmed. In place of ten worthless books we must put one that is worth while. There are already signs of this substitution of quality for quantity in our ideals.

Extension, as opposed to intension, has appealed to many enthusiastic librarians as "missionary work." Perhaps the term is well chosen. Some of it is akin to the missionary fervor that sends funds to convert the distant heathen when nominal Christians around the corner are vainly demanding succor, material, mental and spiritual. We have too much of this in the library; attempts to form boys' clubs with artificial aims and qualifications when clubs already formed to promote objects that are very real in the members' minds are ignored or neglected; the provision of boresome talks on "Rubber-culture in Peru" and on "How I climbed Long's Peak," when members of the community would be genuinely interested in hearing an expert explain the income tax; the purchase of new books that nobody wants when an insistent demand for old standards of sterling worth has never been adequately met; all sorts of forcing from the outside instead of developing from the inside. This kind of thing, like charity, begins properly at home, and the real missionary takes care to set his own house in order before he goes far afield—to fill the nearby demand, when it is good, before attempting to force something on those who do not want it.

It is in this direction that our promise of continued progress lies when we cannot see grounds for expecting great future increase of income.

This leads us naturally to discuss what I have called our socialization, which is just beginning. It is running strong, but there is room for a long course, and that course, I believe, it will take. In the first place, we are functioning more and more as community centers, but there is enormous room for advance. We are straggling all along the line, which is one sign of an early stage. Some of us have not yet awakened to the fact that we are destined to play a

great part in community development and community education. Others are reluctantly yielding to pressure. Others have gone so fast that they are in advance of their communities. Take, if you please, the one item of the provision of space for community meetings, regarded by some as the be-all and the end-all of the community center idea. It is really but one element, but it may serve as a straw to show which way the wind blows. Some libraries are giving no space for this purpose; some give it grudgingly, with all sorts of limitations; others give quite freely. None of us give with perfect freedom. I suppose we in St. Louis are as free as any. In 15 assembly and clubrooms we house 4,000 meetings yearly. Our only limitations are order and the absence of an admission fee. I incline to think that the maintenance of order should be the only condition. If an admission fee is charged, part of it should go to the library, to be devoted to caring for the assembly and clubrooms and improving them. There are many community gatherings that can be best administered on the plan of a paid admission. These ought not to be excluded. Most of our restrictions are simply exhibits of our reluctance to place ourselves at the complete social disposal of the community. A community is not a community unless it has political and religious interests. If we are going to become socialized at all, why balk at these any more than we should exclude from our shelves books on politics and religion? I look to see socialization, in this and other directions, proceed to such lengths that the older library ideals may have to go entirely by the board. Some of them are tottering now. I have said that I consider this matter of the use of assembly rooms only one item in what I have called socialization. It may all be summed

up by saying that we are coming to consider the library somewhat in the light of a community club, of which all well-behaved citizens are members. Our buildings are clubhouses, with books and magazines, meeting rooms, toilet facilities, kitchens—almost everything, in fact, that a good, small club would contain. If you say "then they have ceased to be libraries and are something else," that does not affect me any more than when you show that we are no longer speaking Chaucer's language or wearing the clothes of Alfred the Great.

When we were trying to explain to the architects of the New York branch buildings exactly what we wanted in those structures and met with the usual misconception based on medieval ideas of a library, one of the most eminent architects in the United States suddenly sat up and took notice. "Why, these buildings are not to be *libraries* at all," he said, "they are to be reading clubs." He had learned in a few minutes what many of us still see through a glass darkly.

An even more important manifestation of what I have called socialization is the extension of occupation groups to which the library is giving special attention and special service. The library has always had in mind one or more of these groups. Once it catered almost entirely to a group of scholars, at first belonging predominantly to the clergy. In later years it added the teachers in schools and their pupils, also the children of the community. These are definite groups, and their recognition in the rendition of service is a social act. Other groups are now being added with rapidity, and we are recognizing in our service industrial workers, business men, artists of various kinds, musicians and so on. The recognition of

new groups and the extension of definite library service to them is progress in socialization, and it is going on steadily at the present time.

Just now the most conspicuous group that we are taking in is that of business men. In adjusting our resources and methods to the needs of this group we are changing our whole conception of the scope of a library's collection. As Mr. Dana has pointed out, we now collect, preserve and distribute not books alone, but printed matter of all kinds, and in addition records of other types, such as manuscripts, pictures, slides, films, phonograph discs and piano rolls. Some of these of course are needed to adapt our collection to others than the business group—to educators, artists or musicians. We shall doubtless continue to discover new groups and undergo change in the course of adaptation to their needs.

The recognition of special groups and the effort to do them service has proceeded to a certain extent outside the pubic library, owing to the slowness of its reaction to this particular need. The result has been the special library. I am one of those who are sorry that the neglect of its opportunity by the public library has brought this about, and I hope for a reduction in the number of independent special libraries by a process of gradual absorption and consolidation. The recent acquisition of some formerly independent municipal reference libraries by the local libraries is a case in point. There must always be special libraries. The library business of independent industrial and commercial institutions is best cared for in this way. But every group that is merely a section of the general public, set apart from the rest by special needs and tastes, may be cared for most economically by the public library. If its service is not adapted to give such care, rapid and efficient adjustment is called for.

In a library forecast made several years ago, Mr. John C. Dana stated his opinion that the library, as it is, "an unimportant by-product," is to be of importance in the future, but will then have departed from the "present prevailing type." Without necessarily agreeing to our present insignificance, we may well accept, I think, this forecast of future growth and change.

Professionalization, too, has by no means reached its limit. As has been pointed out, it is a sympton, rather than the thing itself. It is like a man's clothes, by which you can often trace the growth or decay of his self-respect. Pride in one's work and a tendency to exalt it is a healthy sign, provided there is something back of it. The formation of staff associations like that recently organized in New York is a good sign, so is the multiplication of professional bodies. The establishment of the A. L. A. in 1876 was the beginning of the whole library advance in this country. It was only a symptom, of course, but with the healthy growth of libraries I look for more signs of our pride in what we are doing, of our unwillingness to lower it or to alter its ideals.

The familiar question, "Is librarianship a profession?" reduces to a matter of definition. We are being professionalized for the purposes of this discussion if we are growing sufficiently in group consciousness to let it react favorably on our work.

One of the earliest developments of a feeling of professional pride in one's work is an insistence on the adequate training of the workers and on the establishment of standards of efficiency both for workers and work. Here belongs a forecast not only of library school training, but of official inspection and certification, of systems of service, etc. Standardization of this kind is on the increase and is bound to be

enforced with greater strictness in the future. In our professional training as in other professions the tendency is toward specialization. With us, this specialization will doubtless proceed on the lines of facilities for practice. An engineering school cannot turn out electrical engineers if the only laboratories that it has are devoted to civil and mechanical engineering. A specialist in abdominal surgery is not produced by experience in a contagious disease ward. Similarly we ought not to expect a school remote from public library facilities to specialize in public library work, or a school in close connection with a public library to produce assistants for the work of a university library. Increasing professional spirit among us will demand specialization according to equipment.

Popularization, some may think, has already gone to the limit. How can we be more of the people than we are to-day? Are we not, in sooth, a little too democratic, perhaps? Personally I feel that a good deal of the library's social democracy is on the surface. Any member of a privileged class will assure you that his own class constitutes "the people" and that the rest do not matter. The Athenians honestly thought that their country was a democracy, when it was really an oligarchy of the most limited kind. England honestly thought she had "popular" government when those entitled to vote were a very small part of the population. A library in a city of half a million inhabitants honestly thinks that a record of 100,000 cardholders entitles it to boast that its use extends to the whole population. We cannot say that we reach the whole number of citizens until we really do reach them. The school authorities can go out to the highways and hedges and compel them to come in; we cannot. Herein doubtless lies one of our advan-

tages. Our buildings are filled with willing users. It is our business to universalize the desire to read as the schools are universalizing the ability. But we have not yet done so, and popularization proceeds slowly. I cannot say that I see many indications of speeding up in the rate, although our increase in the recognition of groups, noted above, may have an influence here in future. As groups develop among that part of the population that uses the library least, our opportunity to extend our influence over that part will present itself. One such group is ready for us but we have never reached it—that of union labor. The recognition of the unions by the library and of the library by the unions has been unaccountably delayed, despite sporadic, well-meant, but ineffective efforts on both sides. No more important step for the intellectual future of the community can be taken than this extension of service.

Nationalization has just begun. It is speeding up and will go far, I am sure, in the next twenty years. Our libraries are getting used to acting as a unit. We should not like administrative nationalization and I see no signs of it; but nationalization in the sense of improved opportunities for team work and greater willingness to avail ourselves of them we shall get in increasing measure. For instance, one of our greatest opportunities lies before us in the inter-library loan. It knocks at our door, but we do not heed it because in this respect we have not begun yet to think nationally. But having begun national service in the various activities brought to the front by the war, we shall not, I am sure, lag behind much longer. The national organization of the A. L. A. has long provided us with a framework on which to build our national thoughts and our national deeds, but hitherto it has remained a mere scaffolding, conspicuous through the

absence of any corresponding structure. The war is teaching us both to think and to act nationally, and after it is over I shall be astonished if we are longer content to do each his own work. Our work is nation-wide, in peace as in war and our tardy realization of this fact may be one of the satisfactory by-products of this world conflict.

Now it is not beyond the possibilities that the library movement, headed right and running free, may still fall because it meets some obstacle and goes to pieces. Are there any such in sight? I seem to see several, but I believe that we can steer clear. If we split on anything it will be on an unseen rock, and of such, of course, we can say nothing.

One rock is political interference. The library has had trouble with it of old and some of us are still struggling with it. It is assumed by those who put their trust in paper civil service that it has now been minimized. This overlooks the undoubted fact that in a great number of cases the civil service machinery has been captured by politicians, and now works to aid them, not to control them. The greatest danger of political interference in public libraries, now lies in well-meant efforts to turn them over to some local commission established to further the merit system, but actually working in harmony with a political machine.

Another rock on which we may possibly split is that of formalism. Machinery must be continually scrapped and replaced if progress is to be made. It will not grow and change like an organism. The library itself is subject to organic growth and change, but its machinery will not change automatically with it. If we foster in any way an idea that our machinery is sacred, that it is of permanent value and that conditions should conform to it instead of its con-

forming to them, our whole progress may come to an end. I have called this a rock, but it is rather a sort of Sargasso Sea where the library may whirl about in an eternity of seaweed.

Another obstacle, somewhat allied to this of formalism, is the "big head"—none the less dangerous because it is common and as detrimental to an institution as it is to an individual. Just as soon as a person, or an institution, sits down and begins to appreciate himself or itself, to take stock of the services he or it is rendering the community, to wonder at their extent and value, those services are in a fair way to become valueless. The proper attitude is rather that of investigation to discover further possible kinds of service, with the exercise of ingenuity in devising ways to render them effectively.

We have occasionally been accused of taking the attitude of self-laudation, but I really do not think there is great danger of an epidemic of this malady. We do not receive enough encouragement. Once in a while, to be sure, someone tells us, or tells the public, what a great and valuable institution the public library is but the treatment that we receive is generally mildly humorous when it is not characterized by downright indifference and neglect. Whenever a book comes into my hands telling of some movement in which I know that the library has borne an honorable part I always turn first to the index and search for recognition under the letter L. Generally it is not there; when it is, it is almost always inadequate. If we are attacked by the "big head," it will have to be a case of auto-intoxication.

Exploitation is another possible rock. I have already alluded to the danger of capture by a political machine, but there are other interests more subtle and quite as dangerous. Many a useful institution,

intended to be nonpartisan, has been captured and used by some interest or other while remaining nonpartisan on the surface. Our safety, so far, has resided in the inability of most interests to see that we are worth capture. When the drive comes, as I believe it will, our continued safety will lie, not in resistance, but in an equal yielding to all—a willingness to act as the agent for all isms, religious, economic, political and industrial without exalting one above another or emphasizing one at another's expense. Something of this we are already doing, and in so far as we succeed in it we are placing ourselves in a position of vantage from which it will be very difficult to dislodge us.

Assuming the truth of all this—and it is something of an assumption, I grant you—what then, is our library of 1950 to be? An institution not very much larger or more expensively operated than our present maximum, although with a higher minimum. carried on with a more careful eye to economy and watching more jealously the quality of its output. It will have two units of service, as at present, the book and the citizen, but it will tend to regard the latter as primary, rather than the former and will shrink from no form of service that it can render him. The higher quality of its work will be reflected in the greater pride of the worker—in a spirit of professionalism that will insist on adequate training and proper compensation and possibly will use organization to enforce these ideals. It will reach out somewhat further among the people than it does now, although not so much that the difference will be notable. Finally the teamwork between different libraries will be more frequent and effective, assistants will be exchanged freely, readers' cards used interchangeably and interlibrary loans will take place easily and often.

What effect will these changes have on the desirability of library work as a profession? The only conclusion can be that it will be greatly increased. By this I mean that it will be more interesting, more likely to give pleasure to the worker as a by-product. I do not mean that it will necessarily pay very much better. The most interesting and pleasurable occupations are generally, I think, those that do not pay well in money. One should not expect full payment in both cash and pleasure. The exception is where the acquisition of money is itself the feature of the occupation that gives the pleasure. I do not quarrel with those who pursue this form of pleasure, but they certainly have no business to be librarians or teachers, or artists or authors, or to engage in any occupation which in itself constitutes to the worker the fullness of life and its illumination. The library profession will make its appeal in 1950, as it does today, to men and women who like to work with and among and through books; who also like to work with and among and through people; who enjoy watching the interplay of relations between the man and the book and using them for the advancement of civilization. This is an intellectual and spiritual appeal, and it is not likely to be replaced by that which glitters on the metallic face of the dollar.

In taking leave of our subject we may go back to our opening simile of the railroad train. The flier that reaches New York is the same train that left Chicago; its passengers have not greatly changed, and yet its environment is wholly different, so that the outlook of those within it has totally altered. It is in some such fashion that the library of 1950 will differ from that of today. It will be the same institution with the same staff, but it will have traveled far on the rails of time. Its environment, its outlook will

be different, and in its response to that variation it must needs do different things and render a different service. May its motive power never fail, its machinery be kept well oiled, and the crew maintain their strength, intelligence and sanity!

POPULARIZING MUSIC THROUGH THE LIBRARY*

The purchase of music by a public library is justified by the assumption that its use is to be somewhat analogous to that of printed speech. The analogy is, in fact, somewhat closer than most persons realize, and its consideration reveals some mistaken ideas about the use of music in a library and may give rise to suggestions for the improvement of that use. A page of music, like a page of written language, is a record of something whose primary expression is obtained through sound. Anyone who understands the notation in either case may reproduce the sounds. In one case this is "reading aloud"; in the other it is a performance of the music. In the case of the music the sounds may be made with the voice, or with an instrument or with one or several of both at once, but this is only an apparent complication and does not affect the principle. The reader, of course, may learn the language, or the music, by heart and then dispense with the written record. In practise there are important differences between the treatment of records of speech and music. As sound is readily imagined as well as actually produced, both speech and music may be enjoyed by a reader without making a sound. If the reader of a book cannot do this, he is not regarded as at all skilled. Most of us, I think, do not consider that a person knows completely how to read when he is not able to read "to himself", but

* Read before the National Association of Music Teachers and reprinted from the published Proceedings for 1918.

finds it necessary to make the actual sounds of speech, whether loudly, or only under his breath. In the case of music, however, only the skilled musician, as a general thing, is able to read a page of music "to himself", as he would read a page of written language. This is especially the case with instrumental music and with music where there are several parts. An accomplished musician, however, may run over an orchestral score and hear the performance "in his mind", with the quality of each instrument brought out, the harmonies and the shading of intensity.

We may go a step further as a matter of curious interest. Language is not necessarily connected with sounds at all. A deaf mute, who has never heard a sound, and is incapable of understanding what sound is, may nevertheless learn to read. He is, however unable to appreciate a page of written music, and I do not know how it would be possible to explain to him what it is like, except the rhythm of it, which may be made to appeal to the senses of sight and touch, as well as to that of sound. In general, however, the reader of music must at least imagine the sounds represented by the notation before him. This is not the case with the reader of speech. Anyone who can read fast and well enough may, like the deaf mute, understand what he reads without even imaging the sound of the words. One may even read so fast that the mere speed forbids any thought of the corresponding oral language. Skilled readers may take in a sentence, a paragraph, almost a page, at a glance. This is the sole point of difference between reading language and reading music; and it does not greatly concern us here because all that it practically affects is speed of appreciation.

Something that is of greater importance is the difference of purpose usually found between those who read words and those who read musical notes. When we say of a child that he is studying music we usually mean that he is learning how to sing or to play on some instrument with the special view of being able to perform before some kind of audience. A music-teacher in like manner is one who teaches his pupils how to play on the piano or the violin, or how to sing.

But when we teach a child to read we are not primarily concerned with his future ability to read aloud or to recite so as to give pleasure to an audience, what we are thinking of is his ability to read rapidly to himself so as to understand what is in books. Looked at in the same way the main thing in musical instruction would be to teach rapid sight-reading so that the reader should get the ability to become acquainted with as large a number of musical masterpieces as possible. One learns to talk by talking; one learns to read by reading; and the same is true of reading music. And as the omnivorous reader of books always wants to express his own thoughts in writing, so the omnivorous reader of music will want to compose. Neither the one nor the other may produce anything great, but the effort will aid in mental development. As a matter of fact, the child begins to put his thoughts into words before he knows how to read. He is encouraged to do so. No mother ever tried to stop her baby from learning to talk because its first efforts were feeble, halting and unintelligible. How differently we treat the child's attempts at musical expression—for that is the explanation of many of the crude baby noises that we hear. As the child grows, its expression in this direction is discouraged,

and seldom is any effort made at encouragement or development. Is it not a wonder that anyone succeeds in composing original music? How many great poets or novelists should we have if every baby were discouraged in its efforts to express itself in words; if it were never taught to talk and never to read?

By the time we librarians are able to exert an influence on the reader, this period is past, but it is still possible to do something. Our first job is to disabuse the public of the idea that enjoyment of music has necessarily something to do with mastering the technique of some musical instrument. The phonograph has done good work in removing this impression, but we should never be content with the phonograph any more than we should consent to do away with all printed books and rely wholly on works "read aloud" on the victrola. There will always be pleasure and profit in doing one's own reading, whether in speech or in music. One must understand musical notation of course, just as one must know the notation of written speech before he can read books. He must also understand a little of some instrument, preferably the piano; though only enough for sight-reading, his object being to understand and appreciate the music himself, not necessarily to bring understanding and appreciation to others.

I think I have gone far enough along this train of thought to show the principle on which I should select the music for a public library collection. I should form such a collection in precisely the same way as my collection of books. A very large proportion of the books in a public library are properly intended for those who will read them for their own delectation, enjoying and appreciating and

profiting personally by what they read. A much smaller proportion are books for study and research. A still smaller number are dramatic or other selections intended principally for recitation or declamation. So, in selecting my music I would acquire chiefly selections for reading. I do not mean elementary reading—one does not limit his language books to primers. I should buy works of all grades of difficulty, but I should have always in mind the primary use of these for sight reading. Comparatively few would be pieces written solely for display—to dazzle the hearer or to show off technique. Few would be pieces whose interest is chiefly historical or academic. I do not say that I should exclude either of these kinds, but I certainly should not include them in greater degree than I should include analogous material in buying ordinary books. Bear in mind also that I am speaking of an ordinary public library, of average size, not of a university library nor that of a music school; nor a public library so large that it may properly have some of the functions of both of these.

Just as it is a conspicuous duty of the library to raise and maintain the level of literary taste in its community and to keep this fact in mind in the selection of its books, so it is the business of its musical collection to raise and maintain the level of musical taste.

My own opinion, which some may regard as heretical, is that taste can not be cultivated, in literature, or art, or music, to any considerable extent by study. The study of these things must have to do largely with history and technique, and while a knowledge of these is desirable it can not affect taste, although we may imagine that it does. We may reduce this matter to its lowest terms by

thinking for a moment of something that depends on the uncomplicated action of an elementary sense —physical taste. If one does not like an olive when he eats one for the first time, that judgment can not be reversed by studying the history of olive culture. If he dislikes cheese, it will be useless to take him into a cheese factory and explain to him, or teach him the technical processes of manufacture. The only way to make him change his mind is to induce him to keep on eating olives, when one of two things will take place—either his dislike of olives will be confirmed, or it will disappear. As most people like olives when they become accustomed to the taste, the latter result is to be expected. Now suppose that someone does not care for Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata". My contention is that he cannot be made to like it by studying the history of music, or that of this particular selection, nor by analyzing its structure, but that he may be led to do it by listening to it repeatedly. As persons familiar with good music do generally enjoy this piece, it is probable that this result will follow.

I know that I must now justify this comparison. When I make it I am accustomed to indignant protest on the part of some of my students. Is it not unworthy to compare the music of the Moonlight Sonata to a mere physical sensation like the taste of an olive? Only as it may be considered unworthy to compare the great and the small; the complex and the simple. Both the taste of the olive and the sound of the sonata, have a physical origin and impress the brain through the agency of the sense organs. And as a matter of fact I doubt whether the sensation of the music is much more complicated than that of the taste. We know that an acoustic sensation is a unit. When a chorus is singing with orchestral

accompaniment the result is not a hundred sound waves, but one; it strikes the ear drum as a unit, and that vibrates as a unit, so that the impression on the brain, about whose mechanism we are ignorant, must also be a unit. The popularity of the phonograph enables us to illustrate this familiarly. Examine with a microscope a record of a complicated musical performance, with many voices and many different kinds of instruments, and you will find a single wavy line. When the needle causes the disk to vibrate by following this line, it vibrates as a unit, just as the ear-drum does. There is but one disk, yet its vibration enables us to pick out separately the different voice parts, and to recognize the separate quality of the stringed instruments, the wood-winds and the brasses, with the drums, bells, and what not. When we taste the olive, we get a sort of chemical effect. We do not know what happens as definitely as we do in the case of a musical sound, but the various atoms, each vibrating in its own way, act upon the taste-buds of the tongue so that a sensation is transmitted to the brain—transmitted as a unit, just as the sound is. I want to be fair, so I will acknowledge that instead of comparing a single sensation of taste to a sequence of sounds, I should have likened it to a musical chord. To get a taste analogy with a sonata we should have to use a sequence of taste sensations, possibly that presented by a course dinner. I submit, however, that this does not affect my argument.

Let me repeat my conviction, then, that art is primarily a matter of the heart and not of the head —of the feelings and not of the intellect, and that the feelings are trained by personal experience, not by study. One cannot learn to appreciate a poem, or a picture or a piece of music by examining it his-

torically or structurally, only by experiencing it and others like it again and again, and also by experiencing in life the emotions that the art is intended to arouse. Of course I do not mean to say that knowledge of history and technique is not interesting and valuable. It is highly interesting to know the recipe for the pie and to watch the cook make it; but this does not affect the taste.

Knowledge obtained by study does affect ability to reproduce or create. One must know how the pie is made before he can make one himself. One can not write a poem or paint a picture or compose a song, without preliminary study. This should be understood, but it is outside the pale of our present discussion, which relates to the chief purpose of the music collection in a library and of its chief uses. My contention, to repeat, is that it is related to musical art precisely as the purpose of the book-collection is related to the art of literature.

Now the present status of the music collection is precisely what that of the book collection would be in a community where the percentage of literacy was small, where a considerable number of persons did not understand the language of the books, even when spoken or read aloud, where those who knew the language understood it only when spoken or read and where readers were obliged to read aloud before they could appreciate what they were reading. A community, moreover, where teaching generally meant solely teaching how to recite or read aloud acceptably to others, with only enough ability to read to get the sense of an extract and enable the reader to commit it to memory. A librarian set down with a collection of books in such a community would not be true to his vocation if he did not attempt to better this state of things, while admitting

the elements of good that it contained. For instance, the imaginary situation that I have described would be quite comparable with a real appreciation and love of good literature.

In the first place, the librarian would wish to see that all the members of his community were able to understand the language of his books, if not to read it. To remember our analogy for a moment, he would practically fit his books to his people. If they were predominantly French, for instance, he would buy many French books. But one can not do this with music, for music is a language by itself, for the most part untranslatable into any other. We must assume that in the world to which our imaginary community belongs there is but one language, and that to understand the books those who do not know that language must be taught it. School instruction in language is largely limited to reading. Children who go to school understand and talk their language already, having been taught it at home. It is to the homes, therefore, that the librarian would have to look for this instruction and he would have to bring to bear on parents whatever influence might be at his disposal to make them see its value and uses.

Secondly, he would have to see that as many as possible were taught to read the language. This would be the function of the schools.

Thirdly, it would be necessary to see that facility in reading proceeded so far that readers would not find it necessary to read aloud, but could when they desired, read rapidly "to themselves". It would be necessary, of course, to show many of the teachers and almost all of their pupils, that reading is primarily not to enable the reader to recite to others, but to make an impression on his own mental equip-

ment. It is quite possible for one to learn to read out loud after a fashion, in a foreign tongue, without understanding a word of it, but so that listeners may get a fair idea of it. The effect on the reader in this case is absolutely zero.

Musically, this kind of community is precisely the one that public libraries have to deal with. Many of our clients do not like or understand music at all, or they care for only the most elementary melodies, harmonies and rythms—comparable to the literature that one gets in a child's primer. Of those whose range of appreciation and love is fairly wide, comparatively few are familiar with musical notation, and can not read music. Of those who can read, few can read rapidly and with assurance, and fewer still can read without audible utterance; that is, they can not read to themselves. It is common to hear persons who can sing or play on some instrument with a fair degree of success and taste say "Oh, I can't read; I have to pick out the notes and get my teacher to help me." This is exactly as if someone who had just recited an oration or a poem with some feeling should proclaim complacently: "Oh, I can't really read. I had to pick out that piece word for word, with my teacher at my elbow to help me out."

In the face of such a situation the librarian should feel and act precisely as he would feel and act if the situation existed with regard to books, as it has already been imagined and described.

First, he should try to influence the growth of musical appreciation through the home, so that all the children in a family shall come to understand and use musical language as they do the language of the spoken word.

Secondly, he should try to influence the schools

so that they shall teach the reading of musical notation as thoroughly as they do the reading of the printed word, and to persuade teachers of music to teach music really and not simply the art of performing on some musical instrument.

Thirdly, he should point out to his musical clients that music may be read "to oneself", just as language can, and encourage them to try it, beginning with easy examples. Note that reading to oneself can be done only by those who already know how to read aloud, and only by practise. There is no way in which it can be taught.

Fourthly, he should have in his library a selection of music picked out to a great extent to further the ends outlined above. Much of it should be for readers, not for performers. His lists should be made for readers and the comments on individual titles should be for readers. Moreover, they should at present be such as will help the beginner; for a very large proportion of our musical readers are beginners although they may be in the anomalous position of the reader who knows and appreciates his subject matter very thoroughly, while he can read about it only hesitatingly and haltingly. Imagine a well-informed and intelligent student of history who has completely forgotten to read, owing to some concussion of the brain which has not impaired his knowledge in any other way, and you have the situation of many music-lovers.

There were doubtless poets before the invention of alphabets, and one may appreciate a symphony concert without knowing his musical alphabet or being able to use it; but we are accustomed now to considering thorough ability to read as a prerequisite to the requirement of a general education; and I do not see why as complete an ability to read music

should not be a prerequisite for such a musical education as all persons ought to possess.

The analogy between the reading of music and that of language is very close, as we have seen, and we may be guided by it largely; but there is one respect in which it fails. Music and poetry may both be bad in the sense that they are ugly, of faulty construction, or trivial. But poetry may also be bad because it conveys a bad moral lesson or causes one to accept what is false. I can not see that it is possible for music to do this, except by association. A tune that has always been associated with improper words may in time come to be considered as itself improper, but there can be nothing objectionable about the music in itself. Again, music may be improperly used. Anyone would say that a largo in a minor key was out of place at a wedding, or a jig at a funeral. Association may have, but does not necessarily have anything to do with this; but here again the music in itself is not objectionable. This simplifies the selection of music for a library; for it excludes at the outset almost all the problems of censorship. Music is rejected usually for negative reasons—because it is not worth buying; not for any active evil influence that it is likely to exert.

This question comes up especially in connection with certain adjuncts to a music collection—pianola rolls and phonograph records. These are both of great aid in assisting the public to understand the language of music, which they must do before they learn to read it. They may be profitably used, of course in connection with reading, and yet the pleasure of following a piano player or a phonograph with the printed score seems to be known to few. Every library must judge for itself whether it can

afford to put money into these adjuncts but in most cases it is unnecessary to do so, it being easy to get the rolls and records by donation. In doing this at my own library I have been struck with the trivial or so-called "popular" character of most of the rolls received. I am told, also that those who borrow them (and they have gone out "like hot cakes") are largely persons who have not visited the library before. I believe that this sort of music is popular not because it is trivial or "trashy", but because it is easy to understand. There is some music that is both good and easy—easy to understand and easy to read. Schumann's Album for the young will occur to anyone. The compositions of Ludwig Schytte are modern examples. But the general impression that good music is difficult both to read and appreciate—is "high-brow", in fact; and that easy music is always trivial and poor, is a deduction, I am afraid from experience. It is certainly not in the nature of things. However, so long as we want easy music, both to hear and to read, and a good deal of it is trashy, I can see nothing to do but to use the trashy music. With the music rolls triviality is all we have to object to—the ceaseless repetition of the same phrases and harmonies. We must remember, however, that these are not boresome to the beginner. It takes a good deal of repetition to make one tired of a musical phrase. And there is absolutely no question of active badness here—only of worthlessness.

When we come to phonograph records, however, we encounter something different. So far as these are purely musical, what has been said of the music rolls applies to them also, but many of them are vocal, and the words are often far below library stand-

ard. When a record is rejected for its words, the music, of course, must go with it, although as music it may be quite unexceptionable.

The location of the music collection is affected by the purpose for which it is maintained. A collection for scholars alone should certainly be in a separate room, with an expert custodian. But when we regard the collection as a means of popularizing music and of improving popular musical taste, the matter takes on another aspect. A person who comes to the library for the purpose of visiting the music room will find it, no matter where it may be, but the reader who needs to have his attention called to it or in whose case it must compete for use with other books, will never do so. Going back to our analogy with general literature we may note that when a librarian wishes to promote the circulation of some special class of literature or call attention to some particular book or books, the last thing he would think of doing would be to set them apart in a special room. What he does do is to place them conspicuously in the most frequented spot in his library.

This is, of course, only one side of the question. No one can browze in a collection of books unless he knows how to read; and so long as music readers can not read "to themselves", the reading of instrumental pieces can not be done without the aid of the actual instrument. Even when one can read music to himself well enough to pick out what he wants it may aid him to be able to perform the piece on the instrument for which it was written. Now the most frequented spot in the library, where I recommend that the music collection shall be displayed, is not the place for a piano or for its use. This must necessarily be in a separate room.

These are not, however, absolutely irreconcilable requirements. It is not necessary that the music and the instrument should be in the same room. A sound-proof or a distantly-located room, for the instruments, may be used by those who wish to perperform pieces before selecting them, even if no music at all is shelved in the room. This room should preferably be as near as possible to the music shelves, and if it is it must of course be sound proof.

Going back again for a moment to our analogy, the provision of a sound proof music room corresponds to the creation of a similar room for the ordinary reader, where he may take his books and read them aloud to see how they sound. The mere statement shows us how far behind our ability to read language is our ability to read music.

When I first began to present these ideas, which seemed to me to be absurdly self-evident, it was gradually borne in upon me that most people considered them new and strange, both those who agreed with me and those who disagreed. But without going into the question of what music can and can not convey to the human mind, it seems clear to me that both music and language succeed in conveying *something* to the human organism, and do it principally by sound-waves. In the case of both, there is a way of writing down what is to be conveyed, so that the record may be used by another person who wishes to convey it by sound, or so that a person, sufficiently skilled, may convey it to himself, without making an audible sound. These facts seem to me to establish so complete an analogy that we may treat music in a library precisely as we treat ordinary books, both in selection, distribution and use. If to complete the analogy we must insist on certain changes in the attitude toward music of both educators and

readers, this kind of missionary work is after all no more and no other than that which the modern librarian, especially in America, is often called upon to do.

I am a believer in the mission of music. The public library can do no more helpful thing to our modern life than to assist the public to understand and love it. The fact that it is not a representative art makes it all the more valuable as a means of detaching the mind from the things of this earth and transporting it to a separate world. A beautiful picture or statue or poem is anchored to the ground by the necessary associations of its subject matter. Music has no such anchor. It is free to soar, and soar it does, bearing with it the listening soul into regions that have no relations with the things of every day life. It may rest or it may stimulate; it may gladden or depress; but it does so by means of its own, not by reminding us of the stimulating or depressing things of our own past experience.

In the multifarious mission of the Public Library, as we Americans see it, surely the popularization of good music is to assume no unimportant place.

TWO CARDINAL SINS

The sins of which I purpose to speak are Duplication and Omission. They are peculiar to no one class of persons, to no one business, profession or institution. They are ubiquitous and omnipresent. Those who use the Book of Common Prayer acknowledge them when they confess that they have done those things that they ought not to have done and have left undone those things that they ought to have done. This statement covers other sins, both of commission and omission, than those that I have specified above, but it includes both of them. The peculiarity of Duplication and Omission is that they are complementary so far as the labor and expense involved in them is concerned. Their existence is like that of a surplus and a debt in the same purse. To bewail them is like complaining because you have a thousand dollars that you know not how to invest and at the same time because you owe a thousand that you can not pay. The whole world is out of joint because it is doing twice things that need to be done only once, and at the same time is not doing at all things that ought to be done. The man with the thousand-dollar surplus and the debt of the same amount may obtain quick relief by paying his indebtedness with his balance. The world will be relieved when it takes the energy and the money now expended in wasteful duplication and puts it into the doing of those things that are now left undone because the energy and money necessary to do them are expended wastefully. It is very easy, is it not? As

easy as adding plus 10 to minus 10 and getting zero. The surplus and the debt, the duplications and the omissions, extinguish each other and neither of them bothers us any more. Unfortunately there are practical obstacles that do not present themselves in the case of the algebraic sum. These difficulties might occur in the case of the man with the surplus who owed money, if he could be supposed ignorant both of his balance and of his debt, while suffering the inconveniences due to both. This ignorance is the rule, rather than the exception, in the case of ordinary duplications and omissions. Either the duplication is not noticed, because at first sight it does not appear to be a duplication, or when recognized as such, its existence does not seem to be of any consequence. Besides this, both duplications and omissions seem to some to be part of the natural order of things ordained for us and not to be disturbed by the hand of impiety.

One hardly knows when to begin with illustrations where there is such a wealth of material, whether we seek it in civics, or history, or science, or business or in domestic economy. As you have doubtless surmised I intend to take the Public Library as my chief field of research, but I must maintain or at least justify my thesis of universality by a preliminary trip through a much broader field.

First let us take the age-old universal grievance, the unequal distribution of wealth, which from our present standpoint we may simplify by saying that one man has two dollars where he needs only one and another has no dollars at all—omission in his case where there is duplication in the other. I know there are some people who fail to see two sins in these simple and well-known facts, but most of us nowadays are recognizing that it is at least an un-

satisfactory state of affairs. Where we disagree is that some feel that however unsatisfactory it may be there is nothing to be done about it; that others who agree that it is unsatisfactory are unable to agree on what they would consider satisfactory; and that even those who think they know this are unable to get together on a method of attaining what they desire. These various kinds and degrees of disagreement constitute the reason why these two particular sins of duplication and omission continue to be committed.

Now let us take a very big jump, from the general theory of socialism down to the golf-clubs of Middlefield, Mass.—a real place, though I have taken the liberty to change its name. With a population of about a thousand, this model village supported until recently two of these institutions for no other reason than the general tendency to wasteful duplication, already noted. The links on the West Side and those on the East Side had both their ardent partisans. Each club considered the existence of the other a shame and an outrage and each was only too willing to abolish duplication by consolidation, always provided its own particular links should be the ones to survive.

For years this small place supported these two clubs, each with its club-house, grounds, dues and assessments. Those who were not partisans had to belong to both, to keep the peace. Meanwhile, the town greatly needed a small social club where the retired city merchants, professional men and artists who largely made up its population could assemble occasionally, have a game of pool or bridge and drink a cup of tea. But their incomes were not large and they had to keep up those two golf clubs. The situation is so typical that I am enlarging on it a little.

I wish that the outcome were typical too. That outcome was that after years of discussion the clubs were merged, one of the links was discontinued, and the village now enjoys the little social club that it needed. An omission has been filled by doing away with a duplication.

The church history of many a small place is very much to the point. We see three or four denominational bodies struggling with small congregations, inadequate buildings and general poverty when by uniting they might fill all these lacks simply by saving what they are now spending on duplication. Doctrinal differences are said to keep them apart; but to the non-theological mind these differences are not greater than these that must always exist between thoughtful men in the same religious body. It is pleasant to see an occasional lapse into sanity, shown by the union of such churches and the consequent strengthening and growth of a town's religious life. Probably it is not too much to say that the whole problem of Christian Unity is but a phase of this general question of duplication and omission.

In the business world our two sins flourish like green bay trees. Small villages have two groceries and no hardware store; large cities may be overrun with one trade while there is lack of another. These things ought to adjust themselves, but they do not. One can pick out duplication and omission in the stock of a single institution. On asking for something at a department store recently I was met with the remark. "Isn't that funny? You are the fifteenth person who has asked for that in the last three days!" The fact was noted as merely curious and interesting and there was apparently no intention of remedying the omission, even by cutting out some of the superfluous styles of neckties.

The most flagrant example I know of duplication in the business and industrial world is the duplicate telephone company. A telephone company is a good example of a mutual enterprise; its value to any subscriber depends on the existence of all the other subscribers. If a man could afford to buy up the company and discontinue all the telephones but his own, the value would disappear. Two companies are simply a nuisance, involving duplication of plant with no resulting convenience. The same is not true of gas or water companies, because here one user does not depend on the others. You would get just as good service if the electric company concluded to serve you, and you alone. There is, to be sure, wasteful duplication in these cases also, but in the instance of the telephone it is accompanied with necessary deterioration of service.

I suppose I need say little about the existence of our two sins in the household. We are honeycombed with them from the rural dinner table where there are no soup and three kinds of pie, to the housewife who yields to the temptation to buy another evening dress and "can not afford" an outing costume. What we need everywhere is some kind of a Board of Equalization, with autocratic powers, that will rigourously suppress all our duplication and with the money saved supply our omissions for us.

We may learn something from the efforts that have recently been made to minimize these two sins in charitable work and social service. Every city contains numerous charitable bodies, all trying to relieve want and alleviate suffering. They are frequently the prey of unscrupulous persons who manage to get their wants alleviated by three or four societies at once—by each, of course, without the knowledge of the others. The result is that there

are no funds to relieve many worthy persons who accordingly suffer. The two sins in this case are being avoided by the simple establishment of a card-index at a central point. When an application is made for relief the index-office is informed by telephone, the index is consulted, and if it is found that the applicant is already receiving aid from some other source his request is politely but firmly refused.

The present production of books gives us an instructive example of the existence of duplications and omissions on a large scale; and the elucidation of these will bring us a little nearer to the application of our principles to the library, toward which we are tending. I know not which is the more striking fact in connection with the publishing business —the continual issue of useless books—fiction and non-fiction, or the non-existence of works on vital subjects regarding which we need information. Of course this is due partly to the fact that the men who know things are also the men who do things. They are too busy to write them down. It is also due to the abnormal appetites of the semi-educated, which create a demand for the trivial and fatuous. The semi-educated person is intellectually young; he has the peculiarities of the child. Foremost among these is the love of repetition. The little one would rather hear his favorite fairy tale for the hundredth time than risk an adventure into stranger fields of narrative. There is something admirable about this when it leads to the adult's love of re-reading great literature. But in the semi-educatd it appears as an unlimited capacity for assimilating unreal fiction with the same plots, the same characters, the same adventures and the same emotions, depicted time after time with slight changes in names and attendant circumstances.

An African explorer told me recently that the events attending the southward progress of the French through the Sahara and down into Central Africa were the most thrilling and the most important, from the standpoint of world history, among those of recent times. The story of them remains unwritten, except for a few episodes in French that have not been thought worthy of translation into other tongues. Yet in this period how much trivial incident, how much banal reminiscence, has been thought worthy of enshrinement in bulky octavos, selling at four dollars each! The money spent in putting forth the same idle stuff that has oppressed the world for centuries would have supplied great gaps in our catalogues of history, travel and science and have given us vital literature that we may now have lost forever.

In fiction, the sin of repetition is largely due to the substitution of imagination for observation. No two actual things are alike and no two events happen in the same way. Observation and accurate description will never result in duplication. But the semi-educated imagination sees always the same things and sees them in the same way; and its use in the writing of fiction results as we have seen.

Would that we had, to-day and here, realism like that of Turgenief in his "Memoirs of a Sportsman" —the detailed account of every-day happenings; the hardest thing in the world to write interestingly. When we try it, which we seldom do, we seem to revert at once to the dreary side of life, which doubtless exists but surely not to the exclusion of other things. Turgenief's book helped toward the emancipation of the serfs. I will not dwell on that, for Mrs. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin—a very different sort of book, performed a like office for us. I will rather

insist that Turgenief wrote simple, vital descriptive literature; something that you will look far to find in our modern fiction.

Our books of reference are full of duplications and omissions. Search the commoner dictionaries and cyclopedias on the library shelves and you will find countless instances of items of information given twice or thrice and others left out altogether—of words entered under more than one form and completely defined under each, while cross-references lead the seeker to nothing at all. After working a good many years on books of this kind I am convinced that the art of making a perfect dictionary or cyclopedia is the art of avoiding duplication and omission. This can not be done until publishers are willing to allow sufficient time to elaborate a plan before beginning work on one of these books. This, so far, has never been done, and the two sins continue to be committed, here as elsewhere.

It is doubtless time for our application of these principles to the library. We have not to look far to begin.

Take any city of average size and inquire how many libraries it supports. Is there any necessity in a town for more than one library? I am open to conviction, but I doubt. There are excellent reasons for the duplication in each case, I know, just as there were for the two golf clubs in our little town. The duplication in buildings, staff and books is very costly, and the service, no matter how good it may be, is not bettered by this duplication. The trouble may be minimized by co-operation, but it still exists. Take, if you please, the one item of book-purchase. I shall not speak here of private owners, though they must bear their share of blame and of punishment for our two sins; but add together the

book funds of the two or three large libraries—public or subscription—and of the dozen small ones—special, denominational, associational—in a community, and see to what a considerable sum it amounts. If it could be administered and expended as a unit, is there any one who will maintain that the precise books would be bought that actually are bought? We find all these libraries buying copies of the same book when one copy is all that the community needs, each ignoring the others and each lamenting the insufficiency of its funds. I have not forgotten such conspicuous instances of co-operation in book-purchase as that of the three large libraries in Chicago, but I also do not forget that it is rare, and that even in Chicago it has been found difficult to carry it out in the perfection in which it is to be found on paper. If we add private purchasers to the libraries I have little hesitation in saying that the money spent on books in any community is quite enough to buy all that the community needs. The lacks are due to the fact that the sum needed to supply them is spent on useless duplicates.

I am not proposing plans, here or elsewhere, to perform the addition of plus and minus quantities that is so easy in pure algebra; I am merely pointing out their existence. From my point of view the ideal situation in a community is the administration by a single body of all its library activities, even private owners co-operating to a certain extent. Let us refresh our memories with a bit of library history. There are at present a great many separate libraries in greater New York. That is, from my point of view, a bad thing. But there were once a great many more. New York and Brooklyn were full of small circulating libraries—denominational, charitable and associational; and many of them had succeeded in

obtaining small subsidies from the city. The sum of these was considerable—or would have been considerable had it been administered as a sum, instead of in separate driblets. All the considerations noted above applied in this case, but the Board of Equalization for which we have been sighing actually existed here. It was the city government, which bestowed and controlled a large part of these institutional incomes. A city comptroller with a business-like mind saw all this and proceeded to act upon it. The small libraries became branches of the public libraries of New York and Brooklyn. The city subsidy, in a lump sum went to those institutions. If there is any one who now wishes to return to the old system of separate control and duplication of effort, I am unacquainted with him; notwithstanding the fact that I know many trustees of the consolidated institutions who were filled with rage at the summary action of the city. That action was in the nature of both a threat and a bribe—a threat to discontinue the appropriation of city funds for a library that should refuse to consolidate and a bribe in the shape of a hint of additional favors to come if it should not refuse. Mr. Andrew Carnegie's offer to build branch libraries, coming at about this time, made it possible to reinforce this hint very effectively.

Our federal government is being held up as the model for a future world federation, and its successful operation confutes the fears of those who doubt the workability of any such plan. In like manner I beg to point to the library consolidations in New York and Brooklyn as an evidence that such removal of duplication elsewhere would enable us to supply omissions in library service. All we need is a motive—if not the threats and bribes that forced the

New York consolidation, then something of equal effect. But as I have said I am not proposing plans.

The abolition of this kind of duplication requires pressure from an outside body or agreement among those concerned; no one of us, acting alone, can do away with it. But there are duplications and omissions in the work of every library that it is in the power of the librarian to remedy. Many of these are the result of growth. I know of no profession whose members are more continually and consistently looking for more work to do than that of librarianship. This quest is rarely carried on cooperatively in a library. The head of each department grasps every opportunity to enlarge her sphere of influence, with the result that her sphere first touches that of another department and then intersects it, so that they possess certain parts of the field of service in common. The departments concerned may not know of this duplication, or they may realize that it is going on and be unwilling to stop it for various reasons. Each department-head, like the golf-clubs mentioned above, may be willing to abolish duplication by driving her fellow-worker out of the field, but not otherwise; and her fear lest she herself may have to be the one to retire may induce her to keep silence. Sometimes the librarian himself, observing the interference, contents himself with seeing that individual items of service are not duplicated, leaving the two departments to do, in part, the same kind of work, though not in precisely the same items. This is but a partial atonement for our two sins. Although there is, perhaps, no longer actual duplication of work, there is duplication of administration, duplication of thought and planning. All this is waste of effort that should be devoted to doing some of the things that every library

leaves undone. I have elsewhere treated of what I call "conflicts of jurisdiction" in libraries. This comes under the same head, though there may be no actual clash of authorities.

Sometimes we have cases resembling those of the applicants for charitable aid from various sources. Members of the public entitled to library service, the amount of which has been limited by the rules to ensure proper distribution and to prevent monopoly, manage to get two or three times as much as they should get, by applying to different departments, or to the same department under different names. There has been much removal of restrictions of late, in libraries, with the intent to give fuller and freer service to the public. There should be no restriction that interferes with such service. But many restrictions are intended merely to check those whose tendency is to hamper service; and removal of these will evidently injure the public, not benefit it. Traffic regulations are a great bother, but their removal would not be in the public interest. Neither would the removal of necessary regulation of library traffic—the free distribution of books through the appointed public agencies. I sympathize with our modern desire to let Mr. A have as many books as he wants and to keep them as long as he wants; but this sympathy changes to indignation when Mr. A proves to be a library hog, taking advantage of his privileges simply to keep away from Mr. B and Miss C the books that they want. Now and again we find a reader who understands increase of library privileges to mean taking a book away from someone else and giving it to *him*. There could be no more flagrant example of the double sin of duplication and omission—giving A more than he can use and thereby depriving B of what he needs.

The expenditure of time is a domain in which

our two sins become especially noticeable. If one has plenty of money he may waste a good deal without serious effects; but waste of time is different. The total extent of time is doubtless infinite, but not its extent as available to the individual. He has only his three-score years and ten, and astronomical happenings have chopped this up for him into years, months, weeks and days, any one of which is largely a repetition of those that have gone before. So many of our duties, for instance, are daily that the average man has only a few hours out of the twenty-four to deal with emergency work, "hurry calls"and all sorts of exceptional demands on his time. If he gives ten minutes to something that requires but five, he must often neglect a duty, and this constitutes duplication and omission of time, to be remedied by taking the unneccessary five minutes from one task and bestowing it on another. Here again, however, our algebraic addition is simple only on paper. We are hindered not only by our own propensity to waste time but by those whose own is of no value and who therefore insist on wasting ours for us.

This is a subject on which most executive officers can speak feelingly. Such officers are troubled with two kinds of lieutenants—those who keep them in ignorance of what is going on and those who insist on putting them in continual possession of trivial details—more omission and duplication, you see. One special kind of time-waster is the assistant who comes to her chief with a request. Foreseeing refusal she has primed herself with all sorts of arguments and is ready to smash all opposition in a logical presentation of the subject calculated to occupy thirty minutes or so. But the request, as stated, appeals to her chief as reasonable, and he grants it at once without hearing the argument. Do you think

the petitioner is going to waste all that valuable logic? Not she! She stands her ground and pours it all out, the whole half hour of it; and when the victim has granted a second time what he had already granted without argument, she retires flushed with triumph at her success. And while this duplicator was duplicating, the other sinner, the "omittor", was performing some innocent and valuable administrative act without her chief's knowledge, causing him to give wrong information to a caller and convict himself of ignorance of what is going on in his own institution.

Time-wasting, of course, is by no means confined to the library staff. Much of every one's time, in a library, is consumed in fruitless conversations with the public—the answering of trivial questions, the search for data that can do no one any good, efforts to appease the wrath of someone who ought never to have been angry at all, attempts to explain things verbally when adequate explanations in print are at hand. All these things consume valuable time and thereby force the omission of public services that would otherwise be performed. Some of them are unavoidable. We must always charge up a little time to the account of courtesy, the avoidance of brusqueness, the maintenance in the community of that tradition of library helpfulness that is perhaps the library's chief asset. This we can not afford to lose. But without sacrificing it, can we not eliminate some of the bores, cut down our useless services for the sake of performing a few more useful ones, and increase the amount of library energy usefully employed without enlarging the total sum expended? This is one of our most vital problems, did we but realize it.

We have gone far enough, perhaps, to realize that

our two sins are indeed cardinal and fundamental. The authors of the Prayer Book were right. We have done those things that we ought not to have done and we have left undone those things that we ought to have done; and we are all miserable sinners.

If I had nerve enough to add a new society to the thousand and one that carry on their multifarious activities about us, I should found a League to Suppress Duplications and Supply Omissions.

A MESSAGE TO BEGINNERS

History may be described as an account of the conflict between the tendency of things to move and efforts to fasten them down so that they will keep still. Where they have been moving in the wrong direction these efforts have been praiseworthy; but in too many instances motion has been resisted simply because it *is* motion, quiescence being looked upon as the supreme good . In his interesting "History of Fiji". Dr. Alfred Goldsborough Mayer notes that the difference between the savage and the civilized man is not one of content of knowledge, for the savage often knows far more than we do, but is due to the fact that the savage is bound hand and foot by tradition—he is a slave to his imagination, and to that of his forefathers. The conflict in his case has ended definitely with the triumph of the fastening down process. There is no more motion. He can not fall back, but neither can he move forward. He is locked in one position—that of the particular generation, five, fifty or five hundred years ago, when his fight for progress was lost.

With the civilized man the fight still goes on. It is not yet won nor lost and the story of it, as I have said, is history. Read it in this light and it will assume for you new significance. Wars, revolutions, changes of dynasty, racial migrations, linguistic changes, the achievements of art, the triumphs of science, the evolution of social systems, the development of justice, the rise of literature and the drama —everything that marks the story of what has been

going on in the world—is but a phase of this age-long struggle between forces and obstacles of whose origins, at bottom, we know little. So far as the obstacles have won, there are still savage elements lurking in us; so far as we have thrust them aside, we are advancing further toward civilization. The one title that we have to call ourselves civilized is the fact that no set of traditions or customs—no institution—has yet become crystallized into the fixity that obtains with the savage races;—not the Church, not government, not science, nor art nor literature. All these are changing, despite efforts to pin them down. Our language, our social customs are altering; our fashions of dress change from year to year. Our old people, for a man often reverts to savagery in his old age, pass away with words of regret on their lips for the good old days of their youth, when things were different. A savage has never to do this, for the days of his youth and his age are precisely the same—custom, speech, habit, observance, tradition, all are locked up into fixity.

The education of the savage is directed toward perpetuating this fixity; that of the civilized man should be a force in the opposite direction. Recognizing that change is the life-blood of civilization, it should be devoted to controlling and directing that change, leading the mind of the pupil to anticipating and welcoming it and bracing that mind against all feeling of shock due to the mere starting of the machinery of progress. I say this is what education should be. I believe that it is tending in this way. But a large part of it is still savage—an effort to keep our customs, thoughts and actions to standards set up by our ancestors.

The Public Library, we are fond of saying, is an educational institution; which kind of education

shall it dispense? Shall it be a motor or a brake? Shall it look back into the past or forward into the future?

To many persons, the idea of a forward-looking library seems absurd. It is essentially a repository of records, and records are of the past. You will find somewhere, unless oblivion has overtaken it, an address by your lecturer on "The Public Library as a Conservative Force". Such it doubtless is and such it should be—but its conservatism is that of control, not of stagnation. It is the skilled driver who keeps the car in the road—not the ignoramus who stalls it in the ditch. Records are assuredly of the past; but the past and its records may be looked upon in either of two ways—as standards for all time, or as foundations on which to build for the future. The civilized man rejoices in foundations—he builds them deep and strong, and erects upon them some noble superstructure. The savage puts up his great stone circle, mighty and wonderful perhaps, but complete in itself and of no manner of use.

So I ask you, what is our collection of records to be—a stone circle or a foundation?

Now the records themselves—the books—can never determine this any more than the great monolith can determine whether it is going into a Stonehenge or into the foundation of a Parthenon. It is what we do to the books—to and with them—that matters.

The world would never move on without records of the progress that had already been made. Just as surely, it would never move on by reliance on those records alone. What we have accomplished brings us merely to a mile stone in the path of progress. To reach a given point, one must pass the mile stones on the way; but they must be passed

and left behind. We shall never get anywhere merely by sitting down upon any of them. To make a personal application to yourselves, you will never make good librarians unless you master what good librarians before you have learned and taught. But just as certainly, you will never be good librarians if you regard this as a definite stopping point. The trouble with most of our education is that it is static and not dynamic; it looks backward, not forward; it teaches what has already been accomplished and fails to equip the student for devising and accomplishing something further, on his own account.

I am warning you in the midst of a course intended to fit you for librarianship that the course alone will not so fit you. But it will start you—and a start in the right direction is of great value—nay, it is indispensable. When the fielder throws the ball directly into the baseman's hands there is a preliminary motion of his arm. At the end of that motion the ball begins its flight; its start has enabled it to go straight. Your library course will be the throw that enables you to go straight to the mark, but you must not forget that the whole flight remains to be made. My metaphor is a bad one. The ball has no power to adjust or alter its course. You have that power; you can better a good start, or you can nullify it. You may even hit the mark after you have been started in the wrong direction; but to say this is by no means to recommend a wrong start.

All this is a series of platitudes; but to insist on the obvious is often useful. There are so many obvious things that we are apt to neglect some of the most necessary, just as we may fail to see a sign on a building because it is all plastered with signs. Nothing is more common than to assume that a period of formal education, general or special, makes its

subject "fit", either for life or for a vocation. Some never get over this idea and fail in consequence; some discover their mistake and blame their training because it does not do what it can not do and was not intended to do. Formal training trains one to start; it makes one fit to run the race. The race is not won when the training has ended; it has not even begun. The man with a B. A. degree is not ready to tackle the problems of life and vanquish them. The graduate in law or medicine is not a trained lawyer or physician, and when you have completed your library course you will not be trained librarians. You will have been started right, the rest of your training will depend on your reaction to the forces, the stimuli, that surround you on all sides.

What the executive officer is looking for all over the world is initiative, guided by common sense; but it is rare. Possibly our education fails to develop it; possibly no system of education could develop it. But it exists; and we are all happy when we find it. Throwing out of consideration the really lazy, ignorant or incompetent assistant, competent subordinates may be of three kinds—first, he who has been trained to do certain things in certain ways and continues to do only those things in only those ways, not realizing the possibility of change or improvement; secondly, he who does realize this possibility but has been taught, or at any rate believes, that it is not his place, but only his superior's, to take active steps toward something more or better; and thirdly he who both realizes and acts, who does what he can to see that such steps as he can properly take to improve matters are taken and that such as he can not take of his own accord are suggested, in a proper manner, to his superior. If I were asked to

sum up, in a few words, the things that differentiate a well run from a poorly run institution I should say, first, the existence of a staff composed of persons of this third variety, and secondly a chief executive who appreciates and uses them. A progressive executive with a staff of assistants who faithfully obey orders and do nothing more will not go far. His institution may make no mistakes; it may run like a machine, but it will have the faults of a machine—its product will be machine made. With a live staff and a poor executive there will be a maximum of mistakes, absurd and ill-judged plans—a failure to co-ordinate effort in different lines. With plenty of initiative in the staff, and with an executive to select, restrain, encourage and control, we have an approach to the work of a single living organism, the most perfect tool of evolution.

While this means the encouragement of suggestion it also means rejection and selection. It means that while the staff will have to bear disappointment with good nature and without diminution of initiative, the executive, on his part, must realize that a hundred impractical suggestions do not disprove the possibility, or even the probability, that the assistant who makes them may ultimately offer some plan, method, or device of great value. Some of the greatest improvements in library service are due to persons with an imagination and an initiative especially prone to run wild in impractical suggestions.

I realize that I may be regarded as tossing a firebrand among you when I tell you to develop your initiative. An unwise or uncontrolled initiative may do harm, but I fervently believe that greater harm is done every day by the lack of all initiative. Better than any stagnant pool is a running stream, though it break bounds and waste itself in foam and spray.

There may be those who will say: Let the student first learn to obey without question; when he has done this it will be time to talk to him about initiative. Alas! that will also be the time when he has lost the chance to develop it intelligently. No, the accepted standards and the ways of progress must be assimilated at one time. Rather than unquestioning obedience to an order, a rule or a formula, let us have appreciation of the reason for it and disobedience whenever a breaking of the letter may keep us more closely to the spirit.

I can assure you that you will make better assistants if this is your temperament, that librarians are looking earnestly for more of this kind, rejoicing when they see the spark of life among the dead wheels and cogs of the library machinery, determined to give any one who shows it an opportunity to show more of it, by promoting him to a place of greater effort and of higher responsibility and service. When such a promotion comes, perhaps over the heads of others with better training and longer experience, there is often wonder and a disposition to explain it all by "favoritism". And viewed from the proper angle, this is correct; every chief librarian has his favorites; they are those on whom he has learned that he can depend, not only for solid and accurate knowledge of facts and methods but also for quick and ready response to the slightest change of conditions—for appreciation of what is needed in a given set of unusual circumstances and resourcefulness in devising new methods or modifying old ones to meet the emergency—what I have already summed up in the one word initiative.

Every teacher, and every student knows that a good arithmetician may fail utterly when he comes to state and solve problems in algebra. His success

has been due to the memorizing of rules and their application. When he is confronted with the necessity of putting into mathematical symbols the fact that A, B and C can do a piece of work in 3, 4 and 5 days, respectively, he is stumped because an entirely different sort of demand is made on his intelligence. And when his teacher explains how the statement may be made, although he has learned how to state that particular class of problems, he is just as much at sea when he is confronted with the question of how soon after 12 o'clock the hands of a watch will again be together on the dial.

In other words, he has left the land of rules and entered the region of common sense. If he is bright, he very soon realizes that all mathematics is common sense; that rules are very useful indeed, but only as short cuts to mechanical processes.

So, at least so I trust, all the methods and tools of library work are based on common sense—catalogues and charging systems and classifications are very useful indeed, but only as short cuts to certain results that would otherwise not be achieved or would be arrived at too late or too confusedly. We must learn all about these, but the time will come when we shall leave the library school and enter the library. Here no sort of rule, formula, method or process will suffice for us, essential though they all are; if we are to make good we must add common sense, adaptability, resourcefulness, initiative.

Possibly you think that I have been applying the principle of conflict between progression and stagnation somewhat carelessly—now to your own training as librarians and again to the service rendered by the library itself. In truth these are intimately connected. Progressive assistants make a progressive library. A staff that does its work mechanical-

ly will operate a library without initiative. If your habit of mind has grown to be a habit of regarding all the technical detail of library work as part of nature's law, you will be shocked at a suggestion that the library of which you are a part should undertake some public service that a library never undertook before.

You may know already—you certainly will know soon—that this question of the extension or limitation of library service is still a burning one in many minds. Libraries to-day are doing a thousand things that no one of them would have thought of doing fifty years ago. That some of these things are foolish or ill advised I have no doubt. We now occasionally hear it said that there should be some authoritative statement or agreement on what public libraries, at any rate, ought to do and what they ought not to do. But we Americans do not take kindly to limitations of this sort, although they are familiar in countries where service of all kinds is more standardized. We read in a recent magazine article of the trials of Mrs. James Russell Lowell with English servants, when her husband was American minister in London. Wishing to have a loose corner of carpet nailed down, she called on one after another of her domestic staff, only to be told that the clearly-defined duties of each did not admit of that particular item of service. She finally lined them up on one side of the room, tacked down the carpet herself and then discharged every one of them. This sort of thing does not seem to Americans like efficiency. If some needed bit of service in an American town remains undone, and church and school and library all look the other way because it does not fall within a carefully-limited sphere of duty which each has assigned to itself, we shall count them all blameworthy, es-

pecially if it shall appear that one of them is equipped to perform that particular service easily, cheaply and well. The church and the school have both taken this view, and the modern extension of the library's functions shows that it has been doing likewise. It has gone further than either of the others, probably, because it finds itself in many ways better equipped for the doing of civic odd jobs. It is related of a railway manager that an employe whose work was over once asked him for a free ticket home. The manager refused, saying: "If you had been working for a farmer you would hardly expect him to hitch up and drive you home, would you?" "No", said the man, "but if he had a rig already hitched up and ready to start, and he was going my way, I should call him darned mean if he didn't take me along."

In many cases the library has been hitched up and standing at the door when the necessity has arisen, and it has been "going the same way"—in other words, the need of the community is nearly related to the work that the community's support has already enabled it to do. Under these circumstances it is in the position of Coleridge's Wedding Guest—it "can not chuse but hear".

When we look at the library's recent history, we shall see that it is in precisely this way that it has taken on all its additional functions. The old libraries lent no books. But home use of books seemed presently desirable. After experimenting with separate institutions for this kind of service, we have all come around to considering it a legitimate function of the Public Library. Libraries gave no attention to children. When this became necessary, another function was added. These and other duties were very closely related to the library's older functions.

Soon there was a further step, in making which the library took over services whose connection with its primary business was not so clear. To draw an example from what is most familiar to me at present, in the St. Louis Public Library you will find a room for art exhibits, collections of post-cards and textile fabrics, a card index to current lectures, exhibitions and concerts, a public writing-room with free notepaper and envelopes, a class of young women, studying, like yourselves, to be librarians; meeting-places for all sorts of clubs and groups, civic, educational, social, political and religious; a photographic copying machine, placed at public disposal at the cost of operation; lunch-rooms and rest-rooms for the staff; a garage, with automobiles in it, not to speak of an extensive telephone switchboard, a paint-shop, a carpenter shop, and a power-plant. Not one of these things, I believe, would you have found in a large library fifty years ago, and yet they are probably all, in one shape or another, to be found in all large modern American libraries. They are extensions of function; in many cases it would be hard to justify them on general principles. Why should a library allow young people to dance, or men to hold a political meeting or the neighbors to exhibit local products, in its building? Our English friends hold that it is the height of absurdity to do so. Doubtless we should be absurd if we should attempt to formulate a principle about what cognate activities might properly be admitted to the library and should include such things as these. But that is not the way in which it all came about. There was some group of citizens, anxious to engage in some activity, beneficial to themselves and to the community. They wanted a place to meet. Church and school, for one reason or another, real or imaginary, were out of

the question, and they came to the library. The Library had an unoccupied room, heated and lighted. It had the choice of locking out citizens of the community that were supporting it out of the public funds, or of admitting them. Put in this way the library's duty seems clear enough. But there is a step further still. Some demands for help are so old that the knocking at the door has passed out of the consciousness of both those who knock and those who hear. In this case it becomes necessary for the library to undertake what a recent scientific writer calls the "re-education of its attentive control". When an institution reaches the conclusion that it is doing all that it can, or all that the community can properly ask of it, the chances are that it is losing its ability to concentrate. Its duty is to fix its attention on one element of community life after another and ask itself whether it is not overlooking some really insistent demand for help.

I well remember when, in the New York Public Library we used complacently to explain our failure to purchase Hungarian books for circulation by saying that there was no demand for them. But the time came when we put in a few hundred books in that tongue. At once it became evident that we needed not hundreds but thousands. Hungarians came to us from far distant parts of the city only to find empty shelves. This overwhelming demand had been present all the time; only it was latent. It lacked active expression, simply because our lack of Hungarian books was a well known fact. Since then when librarians tell me that their libraries have no books in Ruthenian, or on sanitary plumbing, no out-of-town directories or no prints for circulation, because "there is no demand for them", I am inclined to smile. No matter how near you may be to dying

of thirst, you will not be likely to visit an obviously dry sand-bank in search of water.

The intelligent search for these latent demands requires the kind of interested ability that I have already spoken of as one of the library's chief needs. The library must keep on growing if it is to live. It must take on new functions, and when it assumes some new duty, some group in the community must exclaim "Of course! that is just what we have been wanting all the time". And at the same time there will always be some outworn function that may be dropped off quietly to make room for the new.

Only the librarian must not mistake unintelligent imitation for initative. Imitation in itself is unobjectionable. If what someone else has devised is obviously the very thing you have been looking for to solve your problem, you would only waste energy in trying to devise something else. But if you think you can create in your community a library as good, we will say, as Mr. Dana's in Newark, or Mr. Brett's in Cleveland or Mr. Jennings' in Seattle, simply by copying every detail of those institutions, you are as foolish as if you thought you could make yourself look like your well-dressed friend simply by borrowing his clothes. The library must fit the community; also, in some respects, the librarian. I have recently visited Miss Hewins' office in the Hartford Public Library. I think it is the most fascinating office a librarian ever occupied. But I certainly shall not go home to St. Louis and try to make mine look like it.

This warning applies particularly to the added functions of which we have been speaking above. They should be assumed in response to a demand—expressed or latent. The demand may be obvious and insistent in one library and non-existent in an-

other. If you suspect a latent demand, experiment will generally reveal or disprove its existence, just as those few hundreds of Hungarian books brought out the demand for the present thousands. We have on the east side of our library a broad terrace, balustraded, elevated above the street, paved with brick and stone. It is shady on summer afternoons, and swept by the south breeze. What an ideal place to read in the open air, instead of in the stuffy building! We equipped it with tables and chairs, relaxed the rules to make it easy to take books and magazines there, did everything in our power to encourage terrace readers. The public press saw and approved. Everything worked well, except that nobody came! A failure, do you say? Not at all. We had tried our experiment, tested for our possible latent demand and found that there was none. We had asked our question and received our answer. There are no tables and chairs on that terrace to-day, but we are not discouraged: why should we be? A real experiment never fails: you always get your answer—yes or no. Of course if your experiment is a sham, and you have assumed that the answer is to be the one that you want, you may be disappointed.

It is always a pleasure to watch things grow, to be able to keep them on and guide their growth in useful directions. A library is no exception to the rule. Even growth in size—the simplest kind—has its satisfactions, but extension of service is still more interesting. It is well that there should be a little mystery between the librarian and his public—a consciousness of problems yet to solve, of service yet to be rendered. It is well that he should be on the lookout for latent demands—those hungers and thirsts that he knows must exist somewhere and that he is eager to satisfy; it is well that his community should

regard the library as a place with opportunity and willingness for service yet unrevealed as a reservoir of favors yet unbestowed. This is a living relation, not one of mere juxtaposition. I never envied the kind of service that old Atlas did the world, in standing eternally with it on his shoulders. That was an image of dull, burdensome despair. How much better our modern vision of a spinning globe, circling through space, with all its brother and sister globes dancing around it! And however miraculous it seems, we know that whenever we get up and walk across the room there is a tiny adjustment of balance throughout the whole vast system. There are social balances, too, as well as celestial, and when the library puts out its foot to take a forward step, I believe that they all respond.

These things that libraries are doing have their part in the vast social adjustments in the midst of which we live. Some day a social historian will arise to describe them and set them in their place. I am frequently disappointed when I take up some book describing a movement or an application of energy in which I know that the library has borne a part, to find that its share has been absolutely without recognition; that the word "library" is not even in the copious index. We have been busy doing things —here in the seclusion of the library family we may say that they have been things worth the doing. Some day we, too, shall have our Homer or our Milton.

Let me remind you that this has all been illustrative of my principle that library service, like every other kind of mundane activity, is a phase of the eternal struggle between keeping still and getting somewhere else. At the close of a recent novel one of the most thoughtful of current English writers, Mr.

J. D. Beresford, states the issue thus (I quote from memory): "Virtue is only continued effort; a boast of success is really a confession of failure". Of course, continuance of effort, virtuous though it may be, will be of little avail without ability, intelligence, common-sense—at least a modicum of those qualities whose complete combination makes up that wholly impossible creature, the Perfect Librarian. Training will not give you these—the Almighty bestows them at our birth—but it will develop such as you have already—and none of us lacks all of them.

Keep on moving, then, and when you score a point, rejoice only because it proves that scoring is one of your possibilities, and that you are likely to score many others before your race is run.

LUCK IN THE LIBRARY

"It is better to be born lucky than rich", says the old proverb. "Is he lucky?" Napoleon used to ask when anyone was recommended to him. Literature is full of allusions to luck; history is full of the belief in it and of the influence of that belief on the course of events. Do I believe in luck? Most assuredly, if you will allow me to frame my own definition. One of the most important and fascinating branches of modern mathematics—the theory of chances or probabilities, deals with what may be called luck, and with its laws. Chance, we are told, is "the totality of unconsidered causes". When an event is conditioned entirely by chance we say that it came about by "luck", though the unconsidered causes are there just the same. A tyrant, we will say, stakes his victim's life on the cast of a die. Whether he perishes or not is solely a matter of good or bad "luck". When a basket contains ten marbles, of which five are black and five are white we know that in the long run the number of black and white marbles drawn at random tends toward equality, and we express this by saying that the chance of drawing either black or white is one in two, or ½. Whether black or white appears at any single drawing is purely a matter of luck. In this sense, luck confronts us at every turn, and no one can deny its existence. Now let us go a little further. May chance happenings be affected by circumstances that have no apparent connection with them? Doubtless; but so far as they are they are no longer sub-

ject to the laws of chance. It is because we know this that we are able to study nature by experiment. If in a long series of drawings, from a basket containing an equal number of black and white marbles, we draw chiefly black, we recognize at once the fact that some cause, distinct from the mass of slight and unconsidered causes whose combined action we know as "chance", is acting. We try at once to get at that cause by varying the conditions. If we find, for instance, that by plunging the hand deeper into the basket we get white balls as well as black, we conclude that the white balls were heavier and so settled to the bottom when the mass was shaken. So it may be that a particular series of happenings may be affected by locality, by personality or by season. So far as this is true, chance or "luck" has ceased to act and we must look for the cause. These, however, are precisely the circumstances in which many persons are accustomed to invoke a luck of higher grade and more potent qualities, a luck that clings to person, place, or time. If in a series of happenings more turn out to the advantage of a particular person than pure chance would warrant, he is said to be "lucky". In other words, the necessity of assigning a cause is recognized, and it is easier to call this cause "luck" than to search for it and to identify it. I am not sure that we are right in objecting to this procedure. We do not object to lumping together the totality of unconsidered causes and calling them "chance". It is legitimate to do so when it is impossible to discover and treat them separately. In like manner it may be considered proper to call a man "lucky" when the causes of his success evade detection, though we may be sure that they exist. It is in this sense that it is better to be born lucky than rich. This was what Napoleon meant, I have

no doubt, by his question, "Is he lucky?" He might have said, "Is he uniformly successful, for reasons that do not lie on the surface? If so, we must assume the existence of causes, though we cannot detect them. Doubtless he will continue to succeed, even if we can not always tell why. That is the kind of man that I prefer."

Just a little philology here may throw additional light on our subject. I have said that Napoleon's question was, "Is he lucky?" Now of course Napoleon did not use these words, because they are English words, and he spoke in French. What he said, doubtless, was *"Est-il heureux?"* We translate *heureux* in two ways, "happy" and "fortunate", but they are really the same, for happy means "of good hap", or good fortune. When we say "by a happy chance", we go back to this primitive meaning. The word *heureux* is derived by the French lexicographers from the Latin *augurium,* so that its basic meaning is "of good augury." I think you will agree with me that there is something more here than mere chance. The augur's business was to ascertain the will of the gods, and all through we have the idea of some impelling force that makes things turn out as they do. If this force, whatever it was, was on the side of the candidate, Napoleon wanted him.

As for our word "luck" itself, it is purely Teutonic and our lexicographers do not trace it beyond its earlier forms. It should be noted, however, that in many of these, as in the modern German *glück*, it means happiness as well as chance. This wide association of ideas may be taken to mean that happiness was regarded by our forefathers as always the sport of chance; but I prefer to regard it as an evidence that a life in which everything is for the best —where no mistakes are made and where all is fair

sailing and successful outcome, is dependent on some fundamental cause.

These "lucky devils", that we see all about us—the ones who "always fall right-side-up"—the men whose touch turns everything into gold—the college students who pass examinations because the questions happened to be the very ones they knew—all these are people whose "luck" can usually be depended on to last. It is all right to explain their success by calling them "lucky", so long as we do not forget that this is merely a word to cloak our ignorance of the real causes.

The trouble is that this is what we do often forget. We have been forgetting it since the dawn of civilization, and we inherit our forgetfulness from the twilight of ignorance that preceded it. If the cause of a man's success was not immediately apparent, he must, it was concluded, have effected it by magic or sorcery, or he was in league with the Devil, or Fortuna or some other goddess guided his hand. If he was a consistent failure, someone had hoodooed him, or blasted him with the evil eye, or worked upon him some magical charm, or the fickle goddess had turned her back on him. Nowadays we simply say "lucky dog!" or "unlucky dog!" and let it go at that; but the words carry with them the meaning that something occult is at work—a meaning quite as unreasonable as the specific supernatural causes assigned in earlier days, and possibly still more objectionable.

I am quite willing to recognize that Jones is "lucky". His success is due to something that I can not detect; in fact, he seems to me rather an ordinary young man. He may possibly not understand, himself, why he gets ahead so fast. He may believe that there is something occult about it. Plenty of

successful men have believed in their "stars" and trusted them, and this worked well until it encouraged them to be reckless. Luck and stars are all very well as symbols, but they will not perform impossibilities.

So far I have not openly mentioned the public library, but I have been thinking of it a good deal, and I hope that you have also. It is one of the beauties of public library work that the points at which it touches life in general are many. He who is given the honor of addressing librarians, as I am doing at present, may talk about pretty much what he pleases, when he begins, serene in the confidence that its application to library work will not only be reached in good time, but will even obtrude itself prematurely on his hearers.

In the first place, I believe we librarians should ponder that question of Napoleon's—"Is he lucky?" and should make it part of our tests for employment and promotion, asking it in substance of the candidates themselves, of their sponsors and of the institutions where they gained their training and experience.

Extending Shakespeare a little, we may say with Cæsar, "Let me have men about me who are fat"—fat with achievement. Those who are lean and hungry with failure are not for me. Where the cause of achievement or failure is obvious, this attitude needs no defense. I believe that it is justifiable where the success or failure is generally attributed to "luck". The general feeling that an "unlucky devil" will probably continue to be unlucky is founded on the idea that his ill luck is due to something more than chance. Whatever it is, it is something that we must and should reckon with, whether it is visible or not, even whether it is thinkable or not—certainly wheth-

er the person concerned is responsible for it or not. He may be in no sense responsible for his "bad luck" any more than he is for a physical defect such as blindness or one-leggedness; but all these things must be weighed in estimating the probable value of his work.

I am conscious that such an attitude as this may, in theory, do serious injustice to the man whose "ill luck" is really due to pure chance, just as in the case of the man who throws tails ten times in succession after betting on heads. Such a run as this may happen; it does happen in fact on an average once in 1024 trials. The fact that there are 1023 chances against it justifies us in neglecting to take it into account very seriously. I suppose that the chances against a man's persistent "bad luck" being due to pure hazard are very many millions to one. I am not going to waste any tears over the injustice that I or you or anyone else might do in *this* way.

I once heard a man of great intelligence, the ex-president of a small college, firmly maintain that if one had a basketful of letters of the alphabet, written on cards, and dumped them all out on the floor, it was absolutely impossible that they should be found so arranged, we will say, as to spell out Milton's "Paradise Lost". Now such a happening is extremely unlikely, but the chance that it should occur can be calculated mathematically and expressed in figures. The arrangement in which "Paradise Lost" is spelled out, however, is no more unlikely than any other possible arrangement, and some one of these arrangements is bound to occur, no matter how unlikely any particular one is beforehand. No one of them, therefore is impossible, including Paradise Lost. But I admit that where chances are so adverse, we may use the word "impossibility" in a

rough sense, and so I use it in asserting that it is impossible for persistent "bad luck" to be due to pure chance.

Just here we may consider whether a man may rise above ill-luck, may conquer it, may turn it into good fortune. The ancients evidently believed that he could; that is why they represented Fortuna's wheel as turning. Its rotation may not only "lower the proud", as Tennyson puts it, but may also elevate the humble—change a run of ill-luck into a "lucky strike". The Psalmist ascribes both these functions to the Almighty himself. *"Deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles"*. All this was occult to them of old time; it need be so to us only in the sense that occult means "hidden". If the hidden causes of a man's ill luck may be revealed to him, wholly or partially, by study, or even if he can make a plausible guess at them, and if he finds that they are within his control, he can of course mitigate them or perhaps abolish them. I greatly fear that in most cases of this kind they are beyond his regulation, either because they are congenital or because they are due to habits so ingrained that changing them is impossible. The very fact that he attributes his failures to "luck" shows that he has made some effort to get at the cause and has failed in that, as in other things. The use of the word "luck" enables him to keep his self-respect. It does not, however, make him a more valuable assistant, and his superiors must not fail to take it into account in an estimate of his work.

I believe that some inquiry into possible physical causes may repay us. Teachers tell us of cases where incredible stupidity turned out on examination to be due to deafness. I personally knew of a maid servant whose apparently idiotic actions were caused by near-sightedness. She did not know—poor

girl—that her eyes were not perfectly normal. In all such cases treatment of the physical cause, if it is treatable—alters the "run of luck" at once. All of our libraries should have medical officers, as the New York Public Library has, and the members of the staff should be periodically inspected. There should be a rigid physical examination on entrance.

I ask you to consider, in this connection, the career of Ulysses S. Grant, which has always seemed to me one of the most remarkable in our history. As I walked down the Gravois Road in St. Louis the other day, along which Grant used to drive his loads of wood from the farm, to sell in the city, it seemed as if I could see the stumpy figure clad in its faded army overcoat seated on the load and urging his slow-going mules toward St. Louis, then far away. If there ever was a man who was "down and out", it was Grant at this time. He had been uniformly "unlucky". He had had his chance—a good one—and had passed it by. Opportunity, which we are falsely told knocks only once at a man's door, had sounded her call and he had made no adequate response. A graduate of West Point, with creditable service in the Mexican War, with good connections by birth and marriage, here he was, living in a log cabin on a small farm, hauling wood to city customers. Yet just three years later this man's name was the best known in the country and had gone around the world. He was a victorious general in command of armies. A few years more and he was President of the United States. He was uniformly "lucky". His "luck had changed". What made it change? I can not find that Grant the successful military commander was a different man in any way from Grant the farmer and teamster. He was supremely fitted for military command under a particular set of condi-

tions. When those conditions arose, his genius took the line of least resistance. Such a career is not unique. We learn from it that ill luck may be simply negative—due, not to active causes that force one back, but simply to the absence of the conditions under which alone one may move forward. Vocational guidance may help us here—or it may not. It would not have helped Grant. If he could have been subjected to some miraculous series of tests that would have brought out the fact that, failure as he was, he could achieve brilliant success at the head of an army what would that have availed? There was no army for him, and there was no war in which it could fight. If the question "Is he lucky?" is to be answered "No —but he might become so, if he were at the head of the U. S. Steel Corporation". I am afraid that the result would be the same as without that qualifying statement.

When a librarian was leaving a large field of endeavor to enter upon a still larger one, his office-boy, hearing some speculation regarding his successor, was heard to say, "I could hold down that job myself. I've watched everything he does and there isn't a thing I couldn't do". What he had watched were the motions and they looked easy. But we should not laugh at this kind of confidence. An old stager said to me once "Oh, these young men! They think they can do it all; and the trouble is that *sometimes they are right.*" A young man is a neutral in luck. His good or bad fortune is yet to be revealed. The complete vocational test would be one that could tell whether the office boy were really fitted to be librarian, and if he were, would see that he ultimately became librarian. Now we must rely not only on the boy's own ability to estimate his powers but on his fighting strength to realize his vision. And there

is more to it than this. A worker may have the ability and may know that he has it, and yet he may distrust his own estimate and so fail to follow it up. This is one of the saddest varieties of "ill-luck". We often hear it said "He can do that, if he would only realize it". Too often, however, the man or the woman does realize it perfectly well; his self estimate of his powers may be quite high enough; it may even be too high. Talk with him and you may discover to your surprise that he thinks highly of himself. But at the critical moment he loses his nerve. Doubts arise in his mind. Is he, after all, as able to rise to the emergency as he has always thought himself? He hesitates; and he is lost. His "ill luck" has again been too much for him.

Somewhat similar to failures of this sort are those that arise from lack of initiative. Here I think our training is somewhat at fault. I can almost pick out at sight the library assistants whose training has been in schools where obedience has been the chief thing inculcated, the following of rules and formulas, the reverence for standards and authority. They are of the greatest value in certain positions, but they can not advance far. They are afraid to go beyond the beaten path—to take chances, not, as in the case just considered, because they distrust themselves or their judgment, but because they have been trained not to adventure. Now adventuring is the only way in which mankind has ever got anywhere. There are conditions in which chance-taking is criminal, as it usually is when much is staked for little. The engineer who risks the lives of a train-load of passengers in order that he may avoid losing a minute on schedule time, is a criminal chance-taker. He may have done it once before with success, and the belief that he is "lucky" may induce him to do it again.

The trouble with the over-cautious worker is that because he feels that this kind of adventuring is wrong, it is also wrong for him to stake his personal comfort against a possible great advance in the quality of service that he is doing. Perhaps I have put it awkwardly. It is not so much personal comfort that is at stake, though that is an element, as the feeling that doing things well "in the way that we have always done them" is better than disorganizing them for the purpose of shuffling them into a better combination.

I have on more than one occasion, in Library School lectures, urged this point of view, and I have advised more stimulation to venturesomeness, less pointing out of old paths and more opportunities to break new ones. No one ever reached a new place by following an old path. The path-breakers may be "lucky" or "unlucky". I agree that the "unlucky"—the congenital blunderers—ought to be kept out of the adventuring class—but how shall we tell who they are except by trying? I have thought, possibly without justification—that I have detected a slight attitude of disapproval on the part of Library School authorities when such advice as this has been given. "Let the student first learn the standards, to do things by rule, to obey authority—then he can branch out into initiative." But can he? My fear, somewhat justified by experience, is that he can not. The standards must be taught. The rules must be known and followed, but if along with this there is no stimulation to initiative and the continual instilment of a feeling that progress depends on the divine curiosity of the explorer—we shall be training only routine workers and for our advances we shall have to depend on those whom we stigmatize as untrained. They will be the "lucky ones".

Here are cases where luck is a function of attitudes of mind and may be reversed if a change can be made in that attitude. There are other such. Take for instance the case of the grouchy man—the man who has a quarrel with the world. He is sure that he is unlucky—and sure enough, he is! He does not expect to be advanced, and no one would think of advancing him. His attitude and its natural results react on each other until he becomes a confirmed misanthrope. Then there is the man without interest in what he is doing. Who would be so foolish as to intrust an important task to a man who, it is quite evident, does not care whether it is done well or ill, or whether it is done at all? These persons betray their lack of interest in ways that are familiar to us all. They utterly lack initiative, but for other reasons than the persons whose cases have been discussed above. They have no objections to adventure, but a venture presupposes interest. No one ever set out to find the North Pole who was utterly indifferent to its location or the character of its surroundings. All true success is built on a foundation of lively interest. Hence persons of this sort are peculiarly unlucky. They watch subordinates and newcomers pass them in the race, and they are perfectly certain that this is due to favoritism, or to luck. They themselves are unlucky, and of course they will always remain so, unless they can alter their neutral attitude.

In thinking over the lack of initiative of which I have complained above and the failure of our training to supply it, it occurs to me that we carry this lack over into our work. We are apt to complain of the difficulty of finding persons who are fitted for positions of command and responsibility. What do

we do to elicit the qualities that make one fit for such posts?

We have in our own library a system of efficiency reports, which are filled out by department-heads yearly, one for each assistant. These give needed information about the work of members of the staff, and they also sometimes reveal quite clearly the state of mind of those who make them out.

Two of the questions are, "In what did the assistant fall short?" And "What did you like most about the assistant?" It strikes me, on running over these reports, as I have just done, that the qualities most valued when present and most lamented when absent, are those of a good subordinate—the assistant who goes quietly, efficiently and quickly about doing what she is told to do, is pleasant about it and does not shirk. Here are some of the things that our department-heads like best:

"earnestness, industry and intelligence"
"alertness; readiness to take suggestion"
"excellent standards of work"
"close application to business"
"absolute dependability"
"persistence"
"excellent worker; steady; reliable"
"enthusiasm and eagerness to learn"
"close attention to business"
"tenacity and faith in herself"
"minds her own business"
"fine spirit in work"
"obliging, willing and ready service"
"industry and intelligence"
"general information"
"calm, cheerful nature"
"honesty of purpose"

"patience under criticism"
"politeness and willingness to oblige"
"loyalty, faithfulness and goodness"
"accuracy and systematic methods"
"neat and ambitious"

All these things are fine, I agree, but there is not one of them that suggests the possibility of advancement to a position of command where administrative ability and initiative will count. I do not suggest that these qualities are absent, but I think the record shows that we are not on the lookout for them and possibly do not value them as we ought. Only once in a while do I find a suggestion that a tendency toward such qualities is of interest, as when, one assistant is commended for "independence and good judgment" and another for "resourcefulness".

And when we come to the "weak points" reported, the same facts stand out. Here are some of them:

"lack of accuracy and system"
"too sensitive"
"too reserved"
"often thoughtless"
"not sufficiently painstaking"
"too deliberate"
"tries to work too fast"
"lack of poise"
"rather slow"
"hesitates to ask for needed help"
"lack of system"
"impractical and idealistic"
"not very responsive"
"so eager that she is a bit aggressive at times"

Here, too, the deficiencies reported are predominantly those that would make a bad subordinate;

although here and there we may detect one of the other kind; for instance,

"does not know how to find and develop the best in her assistants"

"not self-reliant"

"disinclined to assume responsibility"

These are all faults of poor executives.

We shall never be able to pick good officers if we do not know how to detect in our privates the qualities that would fit them to command and how to encourage the development of such qualities when there is anything on which to base it.

Luck may not only be "in" but "of" the library. The whole institution may be in the lucky or unlucky class. I think you have known both kinds. The former seem to prosper, to do good work and to win golden opinions by the very fact of their existence. The latter have small appropriations, a poor standing in the community, and are finally destroyed by fire. Now personal ill-luck is and remains personal, but the ill-luck of an institution may be of various kinds. It may reside in a person or persons, or in a system, or in a building—or in all three. If the Jonestown Public Library is unlucky, the ill-luck may be that of its librarian, or of his staff, or he may be operating an unlucky system, or his building may be unlucky. I am an especial believer in unlucky buildings. Some there are in which it appears to be as impossible to run a successful library as it would be to grow vegetables in an ash-bin. Sometimes one can pick out the trouble with half an eye, although the same degree of astuteness seems to have been beyond the architect, or the board, or the librarian who co-operated to produce it. But in many cases we know the trouble only by its fruits; its roots are hidden, and

the best we can do is to recognize that the library's ill-luck comes from an unlucky building, and leave it at that.

There are so many sources of this kind of general library ill-luck, that it is a wonder we do not see more unlucky libraries. There are not so very many lucky ones either, except so far as this proceeds from the possession of a staff whose members are individually lucky.

The statistician knows that the way to eliminate chance is to multiply instances. The insurance actuary does not know when you will die, but he knows that of a million men of your age, very nearly so many will die within the next year. It is because he deals with a large number of cases that he can put his system on a business footing. There may be only one white ball in a bushel of black ones; you might conceivably draw that white ball at the first trial, but if you did you would properly refer to it as "luck". If, however, you could multiply the number of trials, you would bring up the white ball sooner or later. There may be only one good way of accomplishing a result among thousands of bad ones. If you should hit on the right one at the first trial you would be "lucky", but, luck or no luck, you will get it if you keep on long enough. Patience is always a winner in the long run.

This is the way in which much of our knowledge is collected. Edison found the right substance for his first carbon filament by sending for all sorts of materials from all over the world, carbonizing them, and trying them out. The right one proved to be a kind of bamboo. If Edison had hit on this at the first trial it would have been so "lucky" a chance as almost to be counted a miracle; as it was, he elim-

inated chance by multiplication. Nothing annoys an executive so much as to be told that the adoption of this or that course will result in a specified way, when no one has ever tried it. This was a common attitude in the time of Galileo, when the idea that anything could be found out by observation or experiment was regarded as a public scandal. That was the time when a man refused to look through the newly-invented telescope for fear that he might see something contrary to the teachings of Aristotle. These people are not all dead by any means. I have heard them assert that a proposed change would ruin the library and then object to trying it because they were afraid the result would be contrary to their own predictions. The medieval philosophers at least had Aristotle to fall back on; their modern successors would appear to be posing as Aristotles themselves.

A housemaid recently said to her mistress "I've told everybody to-day ye weren't at home; now don't sit in the window and make me a liar." No discovery; no falsehood, you see. So if we librarians can be prevented from trying experiments, the false predictions of some of our advisers will not be false in their own eyes, simply because they will not be exposed.

My advice to librarians, and to everyone else is to keep on trying experiments. If you get a satisfactory result the first time, you may stop, and ascribe it, if you please, to your good luck. If the result is unsatisfactory, however, you need not stand pat on your ill luck.

"If at first you don't succeed
Try, try again".

There is more philosophy in that than in all Aristotle. It is also a practical exposition of the doc-

trine of chances. Somewhere is the combination that you want. You will find it, if you only keep on long enough.

Libraries that are afraid of being victimized by chance, or, as we may put it, becoming martyrs to bad luck, should ponder somewhat more closely the possibilities of relief from insurance. Of course here I am using the word "luck" in its simpler meaning of unforeseen occurrence. Take the case of the library that suffers from the fact that an influential member of the committee that fixes the amount of its annual appropriation has eaten something indigestible for breakfast. Such an unforeseeable occurrence, such a "piece of bad luck", might cost a library anywhere from two to twenty thousand dollars, according to the usual size of its appropriation.

Equally injurious might be the illness of the president of the Board, throwing upon an incompetent member the duty of presenting the library's claims and needs. It is surely unjust that a public-service institution should be at the mercy of such trivial chances. In some states, including my own, the library is removed from such ill-luck as this by a statutory provision fixing its public income, subject to proper checks and taking away the ability of an individual's illness or indisposition to lower it. But where this ill-chance is still in its baleful working order, why should not the library be protected against it by insurance? Such protection would be analogous to the corporation insurance taken out by large industrial companies to offset the loss likely to result from the death of an officer on whose administrative ability much of the company's earning power depends, or to the payment of death duties by insurance, now being advocated by many companies, and adopted on a huge scale by Mr. J. P. Morgan. Insur-

ance is the great equalizer; it multiplies instances, enlarges the field of possibilities and abolishes ill-luck. We are availing ourselves of it in case of possible damage by fire or storm, or of loss through our liability as employers. We may in future use it to cut out chance and luck in other fields also and to make our resources so dependable that we may devote to the extension and betterment of service the ingenuity now often spent solely in devising means "to get along".

I am afraid that you will compare this address very unfavorably with the celebrated chapter on snakes in Iceland, because whereas the author of that was able to announce the non-existence of his subject in six words, it has taken me a good many thousand. You will do me an injustice, however, if you think that I have simply been demonstrating the non-existence of luck. I believe that when we say a man is lucky, we mean something definite, and that thing surely has an existence. It may not be the Goddess Fortuna, or her modern successor, but it is very real and it is worth investigating and taking into account. If you are told that one of your assistants is "lucky", do not laugh it away. Find out the facts, and if they indicate that she is unusually successful in what she undertakes, be thankful that you have a lucky person on your staff. Cherish her and promote her. And if you can find such a person outside of your library, with the other necessary qualifications, prefer him, or her, in making an appointment, to one of the "unlucky" variety. It is of the lucky kind that the world's geniuses are made—inventors like Bell, Edison and Marconi, captains of industry like Carnegie, Rockefeller and Henry Ford, soldiers like Napoleon, Grant, and Moltke, statesmen like Lincoln, Gladstone and Bismarck, poets like Shakespeare, Dante

and Goethe. We have had too few of these in the library profession. They were all lucky and what we need, especially in the present emergency, is plenty of "Luck in the Library".

THE LIBRARY AS A MUSEUM

Boundary regions are always interesting. Close to the line separating two regions of fact or of thought cluster the examples that fascinate us. Kipling's stories of India are so interesting because they tell of the meeting points of two civilizations—the boundary along which they come into contact, interact and fuse. The same is true of all tales of the white man and the red Indian, of the stories of early explorers, of the narratives of Spanish *conquistadores* in the south and French Jesuits in the north. The student of mathematical physics will tell you that it is not in homogeneous regions, but along boundary lines that the application of his equations becomes difficult, and at the same time interesting. Our whole human life is conditioned by boundaries. It is possible only on a surface separating the earth's mass from its atmosphere. It is limited by narrow conditions of temperature, nourishment, light, and so on. So we need not be astonished when we find that two related subjects of any kind acquire new vitality and new interest when we study the region along the line where they touch. This is especially true of the library and the museum.

I do not intend to dwell on the case where the books in a library are themselves treated as museum objects, although possibly this is the one that may first occur to the mind in this connection. Books that are curiosities on account of their rarity or for other reasons are limited usually to very large libraries. The Lenox Library in New York, now part of

the Public Library, was almost entirely a book-museum and was so intended by its founder. The private libraries of great collectors, such as J. Pierpont Morgan, or the Huntingtons, are often largely book-museums, and in general, a book that brings a high price, brings it for its value as a curiosity, not as a book. The freer a book is the more value it has as a book; the more restricted it is the greater its value as a curiosity. Of course, even a small library may have one or two books that are worth display as curiosities, because they are old, or rare, or have interesting local associations either through the author, or the owner, or in some other way. The Hawthorne and Longfellow room in the Bowdoin College Library is an example of this latter case. But a book, or anything else, owned and displayed as a mere curiosity, is of not much real value, no matter what price it may bring at auction. The things that make a good museum what it is are not curiosities at all, in the vulgar sense. They illustrate some science or art and make its study easier and more interesting; they throw light on geology or history or sculpture. Once in a while we see a museum collection of books made for this object, to illustrate the art of binding or the history of printing, or the depredations of book-eating insects. The value of specimens like these has nothing to do with their rarity. Sometimes the smallest library may have books or pamphlets that may be displayed with this object, especially where the subject is local. It may for instance gather a collection of early pamphlets from local printing offices, or of books once the property of some eminent citizen.

These things belong to a museum pure and simple, which is the reason why I am mentioning them at first, to get them out of the way before treating my

real subject, which is the debateable ground between library and museum. There is nothing debateable about a book-museum any more than about any other kind of a museum—a collection of historical or geological specimens, for instance, that often finds place in a library building, not because it is a library, but because it is a convenient place, or because it has been thought best to build a library and a museum under one roof, as has been done in Pittsburgh.

There is however a real debateable ground between library and museum, with somewhat hazy boundaries which I believe that either is justified in overstepping whenever such an act supplies an omission and does not duplicate. In other words, there is a boundary region between library and museum that may be occupied by either, but should not be occupied by both.

I shall try briefly to define this region and indicate how the library may occupy parts of it without legitimate criticism when the necessity arises.

Descriptive and illustrative material is to be found in both library and museum. Speaking generally, the former is of primary importance in the library and the latter in the museum. Many books consist of descriptive text alone, without pictures or diagrams, and on the other hand a museum might contain specimens without labels, although they would not be of much use. In general, text with illustrations belongs in a library and specimens with labels in a museum. The mere statement of the distinction as it has just been given, however, shows that it may be very difficult to draw a line between the two kinds of collections. A museum has been defined as "a collection of good labels accompanied by illustrative specimens." Here the value of the descriptive text is emphasized, even in the museum collection. When descriptive treatises are shelved in

connection with the specimens, as in some modern museums, we have an expansion of the label into the book; and the museum, in this one particular at least, crosses the dividing line between it and the library. No one would blame it for so doing.

Similarly the library may occasionally cross the line in the other direction without incurring blame. Let me repeat that both library and museum may contain descriptive and explanatory text and illustrative material. In the museum the text is usually in the form of labels, attached to the specimens, and these are generally material objects. In the library the text is in book form and the "specimens," if we may so call them, are plates bound into the book.

The first step taken by the library toward the line that separates it from the museum is when the plates, instead of being bound into a book, are kept separately in a portfolio. The accompanying text, corresponding to the "labels" of museum collections, may be on the same sheet as the plates (often on the reverse side) or on separate sheets, which may be bound into a book even when the plates are separate.

In the St. Louis Public Library about a thousand volumes, forming one third of the collection kept regularly in our art room, have separate plates. These are of course not usually on display but are in the cases ready to be used in the room on demand. They thus correspond, not with museum material displayed in cases, but with specimens packed away in such manner that they may easily be secured for study by those who want them. One may imagine a whole museum equipped for students in this way, with nothing on display at all—no popular exhibition features. Probably no museum was ever so administered, as an entirety; and as you know the large museums are making more and more of features adding to the attractiveness of the collection as

a popular spectacle. The public visits the Museum of Natural History in New York, much as it turns the pages of the National Geographic Magazine—just to look at the pictures. This treatment of material is justified because it increases popular interest in the subject-matter and brings people to the museum who would not otherwise enter it. Also, it predisposes public bodies to more generous support of the museum. This is true again of such institutions as botanical and zoological gardens, which have always been show-places for the public as well as laboratories for the student. The library can not afford to neglect such an opportunity of attracting the public and of stimulating interest in its own subject-matter—books. It can not continuously display any great part of its separate prints, as a museum does with its specimens, but it can exhibit them from time to time, so that one or another of them is always displayed in this way. Simple screens can be cheaply made and the prints fastened thereto with thumb-pins, taking care not to injure them by perforating with the pin, but letting the edge of the head lap over the edge of the print to hold it, and using sheets of transparent celluloid for protection, where necessary. After beginning such displays in our own library, we found them so popular with our readers and so helpful in our own work that we are now holding thirty or forty yearly, sometimes two or three at once in different parts of the library, supplementing our own material with loans from interested friends.

The value of exhibitions of plates is so highly estimated by some librarians that they are breaking up valuable volumes so that the plates may be used separately. This is a second step toward the museum use of the library. I have heard a well-known librarian assert that if permitted by his Board he would

dismember every art book in his library, in this way. Most of us, especially if we are interested in the exhibition side of library work—which is distinctly a museum side—will be inclined to sympathize with him.

But although we hesitate, perhaps, to tear to pieces good books, even for such a good purpose as this, there is much material that can be so treated with a clear conscience. Many duplicates of art works can be thus used, and there is hardly an illustrated book which when the librarian is ready to throw it away does not contain plates or maps which can be saved and used. In St. Louis when we condemn books they are never destroyed and consigned to the old-paper dealer before passing through the hands and before the eyes of all those who might use still usable fragments of this kind. Taking the item of maps alone, some of the best special maps are attached to volumes of travel or history, as folders or in pockets. So long as the book is usable, the map, of course, must go with it, but if the map has been reinforced with linen when the book is purchased, as it ought to be, it will probably be in usable condition when the book is worn out, and may at once be transferred to the map collection. The same is true of other plates than pictures—fac-similes of handwriting, for instance. A very fair autograph collection may be made of such detached plates—not originals of course, but originals are valuable merely as curiosities, in the way that we have already noted. Facsimiles are as good for any other purpose.

Of course all such torn up or detached material is very convenient also for reference use—easily filed and quickly consulted. It may be kept in vertical file cases, in loose-leaf binders or in ordinary portfolios. One of the interesting things about it is the facility of assembling it in different ways. In

our own library we sometimes tear apart the leaves of an art book simply to group the plates in an order that will make them more valuable for reference purposes. This leads us to another nearly related, though I should call it a still further, step toward the museum region, which is taken when we deliberately create specimens by clipping and mounting. Most libraries are now doing this freely, both for reference work and for circulation. In many cases there are no separate labels here except a brief descriptive title, the material being classified according to its subject or its intended use. The similarity to the school museum or circulating museum—a very recent development of museum work—is striking. In this field the library has been ahead of the regular museums. The material clipped and mounted is usually book material—largely plates from books, magazines or papers. There is much other material that can be so mounted and used—the kind of thing that is familiar in memorabilia scrapbooks—theatre and concert programs, announcements, invitations, tickets of admission, badges, menus, photographs, advertising material, etc. It is usually a mistake to make permanent scrap-books of such material. When they need to be assembled in book form the separate mounts can be brought together in a loose-leaf binder. A permanent scrap-book ties the material together in a way that may prove embarassing. Suppose, for instance, that you are keeping printed material from three clubs in your town, as you ought. Clubs seldom do this for themselves. Several St. Louis women's clubs have told us that they visit the library when they want to indulge in research into their own past doings. It might be natural to keep a scrap-book for each club and insert the material as it comes. But suppose you desire to display all your material on war activities and that some of the

material in these scrap-books falls under this head. You will have to leave it out or tear out your scrap-book leaves.

Mounting takes time, and it is not necessary to mount everything. Material used only occasionally may be left unmounted. For instance, much newspaper-clipped material may be kept loosely in heavy manila envelopes. Again, some material may be made more accessible if not mounted, especially if in card form and in standard sizes. Such is the postal card. The amount of valuable material obtainable in postal-card form will astonish those who have not looked into the matter. Besides the usual views of localities, embracing buildings, monuments and scenery, good collections of sculpture, architecture, portraits and many other things may be made in postal-card form. Postal cards are all of the same size and very compact, so that they may be filed in trays and treated very much like catalogue cards, guides being used with them as in an ordinary catalogue. The amount of usable material that can be stored to the square foot in this form is probably greater than any other.

In all material of this sort, the similarity of collection, treatment and use may be so close that the passage from the picture to the object seems almost negligible; yet many persons apparently consider that here we must draw the definite boundary line between the collections of the library and those of the museum. They would say for instance that it is perfectly legitimate for a library to acquire, preserve and use a plate bearing a printed fac-simile in natural colors, of a piece of textile goods, but not a card mount bearing an actual piece of the same goods, although the two were so similar in appearance that at a little distance it would be impossible to tell the colored print from the actual piece of textile. Li-

brarians will not be apt to attach much importance to this distinction, and those whose collections include treatises on textiles with colored plates will not hesitate to supplement them with mounted specimens of the actual textile with typewritten descriptions.

Generally manufacturers are only too happy to furnish samples of their current output, and older specimens, sometimes of historical interest, can be bought from dealers.

There are precedents for the treatment of this sort of thing as library material. Probably Hough's well-known work on American Woods will occur to everyone. No library, so far as I know, has ever thought of barring this from its shelves because it contains actual thin sections of the various woods instead of pictures thereof.

The peculiar adaptability of this kind of material to library use is a physical one, and is shared by every flat specimen that may be mounted on sheets. Instances will occur to every one. An actual flower or leaf, for example, is generally cheaper than a color reproduction of it, and takes up little more room when mounted. A good descriptive botany with inadequate pictures may well be supplemented by a herbarium of this kind. Historical material is quite generally flat—often written or printed on card or paper—old programs, menus, railroad tickets, dance-cards, timetables, cards of admission, souvenirs of all kinds. One of the most interesting exhibitions I ever saw was of foreign railway material—timetables, tickets, dining-car menus, etc. Many Chinese and Japanese specimens were included. A treatise on forms of railway tickets, with fac-simile illustrations, would be eagerly sought by libraries; why should not the objects themselves be equally valuable? Librarians were glad to have Miss Kate San-

born's book on old wall papers, with its realistic reproductions, but how many of them thought of the possibility of making their own books of specimens, using the papers themselves, instead of photographic facsimiles thereof?

This point of view may be commended to the makers of decorated bulletins in libraries. Much laborious hand-work is often done in the preparation of these, and the results are seldom worth the trouble. Even when a work of art has been produced it may be questioned whether the time withdrawn from other library work has been employed to the best purpose. By the use of what has been called above "museum material" time may be saved and better results reached. For instance, I once saw, in an exhibition of picture bulletins one bearing a list of books and articles on lace. It was made in white ink on black cardboard, and bore a most realistic representation of lace, done with the pen, probably at a vast expenditure of time. The most that could be said for this really clever bit of work was that it looked enough like a real piece of lace, mounted on the cardboard, to deceive the elect at a short distance. Why then did not the maker mount a real bit of inexpensive lace on the board, at an expenditure of a few minutes' time? It should not require much thought to see that bulletins prepared in this way are usually better and more effective than elaborate decoration with pencil and brush.

Another point of resemblance between this kind of library material and that utilized by museums is the fact that its value is so often a group-value—possessed by the combination of objects of a certain kind, rather than by any one in itself. For instance, a common earthenware jar designed by John Jones in the Trenton potteries may have little value, but if you add to it a thousand other earthenware jars,

or a thousand pieces of any kind designed by John Jones, or a thousand other specimens made in Trenton, the collection acquires a value which far exceeds the average value of its elements multiplied by thousands. The former may be five cents—the latter five thousand dollars. In the same way an illustration by Mary Smith, clipped from a trashy story in a ten-cent magazine, has little value—zero value, perhaps. But a thousand such illustrations showing the published work of Mary Smith from the time she began until she acquired standing as an illustrator, is worth while.

It should not be necessary to tell librarians that the best way to make such a collection as this is not to search for each element by itself but to gather miscellaneous related material in quantity and then sort it. If you have a pile of slips to alphabetize, you do not go through the whole mass to pick out the A's, and then again for the B's, and so on. You sort the whole mass at once, so that while you are segregating the A's you are at the same time collecting the B's and all the rest of the alphabet. Likewise, if you want the illustration work of Jessie Wilcox Smith, for instance, you need not hunt separately for bits from her pen; you need only clip all the illustrations from magazines and papers that would be otherwise discarded. Then you sort these by the names of the illustrators, and you have at once collections not only of Miss Smith's current work but of that of dozens of other illustrators. This is applicable in a hundred other fields.

It should be noted that this group value is potentially present in many large collections of material, whether classified or not into the particular groups in question. For instance, we have a large collection of locality post-cards, filed by cities and towns. Here are groups ready for use. If anyone wants

views of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, or Stockton, Cal., to show to a class, or for use with a reflectograph, or to copy for newspaper work, they are already assembled. But also if someone is going to lecture on court houses, it is the work of only a few moments to assemble from the file a temporary collection of fifty or sixty examples. The same is true of buildings of any other type, say college dormitories, railway stations, libraries or warehouses, of parks, mountain scenery and industrial processes and of a hundred other things. The value here is a true group value; it is created by assemblage and becomes dormant again when the items are distributed to their proper places in the file.

The same is true of lantern-slides to an even greater degree, for slides are practically never used except in groups. As a collection of slides may be grouped in scores of ways, it is better to file them in some order that will admit of quick selection, than to form groups arbitrarily at the outset and keep these together. A slide in such a group is practically withdrawn from the possibility of assemblage in some other group. For instance, a view of Michael Angelo's "Moses" might find a place in a group to illustrate a talk on Michael Angelo, or Renaissance Sculpture, or The Art Treasures of Rome, or Old Testament Worthies, or any one of a dozen others. If we place it arbitrarily in any one of these and keep the group together, we shall of course spare ourselves a little trouble if anyone wants that particular assemblage of slides, but we shall not only make it more difficult to assemble the other groups, but practically put them out of the running. Several years ago we had a valuable gift of a collection of slides illustrating phases of city-planning, given by the Civic League of our city. They included many foreign views now difficult or impossible to obtain.

The donors had assembled them in groups to go with lectures prepared in advance and we maintained this arrangement for a time, although it was not in accord with our general plan. But we soon found that persons who asked for slides on London or Munich or Milan were missing some of our best material, simply because we could not always remember to look through the city-planning groups for something that might be there. Consequently we broke up these groups and distributed their slides to the proper places in our file, which is in trays arranged precisely as if the slides were catalogue cards, with proper guides and cross-references on cardboard slips. We have memoranda of the slides that belong in each lecture group and these can be quickly assembled if wanted. Of course we allow the public to go directly to the trays if they desire and assemble for themselves any group that they choose.

This is all borderland material between library and museum. There is much of it analogous to the lantern slide that libraries have not taken up yet, but that they might handle to good advantage. I do not see why we should not, for instance, circulate microscope slides or photographic negatives. Stereoscopic pictures are now commonly handled by libraries owing to skilful and perfectly legitimate exploitation.

There is perhaps some doubt whether we should include in this sort of material musical records, either for the mechanical organ and piano or for the phonograph. These should possibly be considered as books containing music written in a kind of notation that admits of sound-reproduction. The fact that there is this doubt should perhaps suffice to throw these records into the borderland of which we are speaking. They are to some extent capable of the group arrangement spoken of above, as where a

library patron asks to take out half a dozen records from one opera or eight old French dances. They are also capable of a kind of correlation with other library material that is quite unique. Thus a reader may take out at the same time Chopin's military polonaise in ordinary notation and in music-roll form. The pianola reproduction serves as a guide to his own reading of the piece, or he may simply follow the musical notation as he operates the mechanical player. Similarly, he may take out the miniature orchestral score of a selection and the phonograph record of the same as played by an actual orchestra. Here he can not play the piece himself but he can follow the reproduction with score in hand, much to his own musical pleasure and profit.

An exactly similar correspondence exists between an ordinary book and a phonograph record of it read aloud. Such records are not often available, but I see no reason why they should not become so, at any rate in the case of poetical and oratorical selections. Our means of popular instruction in spoken language are deficient and these might prove useful. At present we teach children in the schools to read and write, but not to speak. If they do not learn good colloquial spoken English at home, they are apt to remain uneducated in this respect. This plan has worked well in the teaching of foreign languages and it is now possible to buy small phonographs with cylinder records in French, German or Italian corresponding to printed passages in the accompanying manuals. I certainly think it legitimate of libraries to purchase these, and they would be "borderland" material, I suppose, in the same sense as the musical records.

I may say before closing, in regard to this sort of museum material, that the largest circulation of music rolls that I know of is that of the Cincinnati

Public Library, which distributes them at the rate of 60,000 per year. We have 3681 rolls and circulated 16,814 in the year 1917. Neither the Cincinnati library nor our own pays out money for this material. It is all donated.

The status of phonograph records of all kinds as museum material is hardly as high in this country as abroad. In the Sorbonne, in Paris, records of French dialect speech have long been acquired and stored. Records of this kind and moving-picture films, made of permanent material and carefully prepared to show existing conditions would have very high future value. I do not know of any systematic effort to collect them in the United States. Possibly it might be difficult to find permanent films. A moving picture man told me that only perishable ones were being made, as it was not for the interests of the trade that they should last long. There is too much of this spirit in modern industry and trade, and it is responsible for poor materials of all sorts—paint, textiles, dyes and furniture. Permanent carbon photo-prints on paper can be made and doubtless the process can be applied to transparent films if desired.

This is really museum material, but if no museum takes it up, I should like to see the Public Library begin the work. We already have the films of our great St. Louis Pageant of 1915, which may serve as a beginning.

It has been said above that museum material adaptable to library use is so for physical reasons. We may go further and say that the whole difference between a library and a museum is a physical difference rather than one of either object or method. The difference is one of material and of the manner of its display, and these are conditioned by physical facts. The difference between an object and a pic-

ture of it is physical. It should not astonish us, then, that when this physical difference is abolished, as it is when the object itself is a picture, or is minimized, as when the object is flat like the picture and resembles it closely, like a textile specimen, the boundary between the museum and the library practically disappears.

THE LIBRARY AND THE LOCALITY

There is nothing more important than standardization, unless it is a knowledge of its proper limits. Probably no more important step has ever been taken than the introduction of standardization into the industries; the making of nails, screws, nuts and bolts of standard sizes, the manufacture of watches, firearms and machines of all sorts, with standard interchangeable parts. If you take apart a thousand Ford automobiles and mix up the parts a thousand automobiles may be at once assembled from those parts, without any effort at selecting the particular ones associated with each other at first. You know that this principle is now being applied to what are known as "fabricated" ships where certain types of freight-carriers are made standard and then twenty or thirty of a kind are built at once in the same yard, being assembled from steel parts cut out and punched in what are called "fabricating ships".

Now I need not waste time in arguing here that this process can not be made to apply universally or be used indefinitely. To standardize a work of art would be to kill it. Standardization is valuable where interchangeability is necessary rather than adaptation to local conditions. Portable houses, for instance, with interchangeable parts, have been standardized to a certain extent, but only within the bounds of uniform climatic conditions. The standard houses for Michigan and Alabama would have to be different. It is important, therefore, as I have said, to know, when standardization is being carried out, the limits of its advisability and the conditions

under which it becomes useless or injurious. This is of interest to us librarians because our methods and processes, our buildings, our book collections and the use of both have long been undergoing this very process. And it is surely desirable that almost all the routine processes of library work, and the others to some extent, should be standardized.

This standardization has been going on ever since librarians began to meet together and began to issue their own professional literature; in other words, ever since the formation of the A. L. A. in 1876 and the establishment of *The Library Journal* about the same time. The subsequent formation of State Library Associations and local library clubs, as well as the establishment of other library periodicals, has greatly multiplied the opportunities for librarians to talk over their work with each other, to learn of other and better ways of doing things, to compare existing methods and to determine, if possible, which of them best serves the purpose for which it was devised. These things having in some measure been decided, they were then crystallized and fixed by the rise and success of Library Schools, summer-schools and training classes, which selected the methods that had stood the test of time and had emerged from the crucible of discussion and formulated them into standards which were thenceforth taught to their students. This, I think, is a fair statement of the way in which our present library standards came to be standards.

It is a good way to select the best and to ensure that the best shall not be departed from. If the best always remained best, we should have no quarrel with it. Unfortunately there is flux and change all about us. A method is best when it best corresponds to the conditions. We can ensure that the method shall not be changed, but we have no control over a large

proportion of the conditions. They change, in spite of us; and then the methods ought to change with them. In some instances we have erred, possibly, by making it a little hard to change them. We are now ready to consider some of the cases where standards ought not to obtain—where one library ought to try to be different from another instead of exactly like it.

It is evident from what was said above about portable houses, that differenec of locality is apt to introduce important exceptions into any rule of this kind; and it is on these exceptions that we are to dwell particularly to-day. There are thousands of particulars in which it is desirable that a library in one town should be conducted exactly like one in another town. What are the particulars in which the library must or should be different?

First, let us consider the stock of books. If these have been selected properly, differences between the two towns will perhaps be first reflected in these, for a library's ability to serve its community depends primarily on certain correspondences between the books and the readers. These correspondences may be summarized by saying that the books in a library must represent a combination of the readers' wants and their needs. These might always coincide in an ideal community, but in practice no librarian thinks of paying attention to the one to the exclusion of the other. At the same time the demands of the readers should always be known and always considered even if they want what is unnecessary; and we must likewise try to ascertain what they need, even if they have no desire for it. The extremes in a community without library taste would be a library of trashy fiction and one of serious standard works at which no one ever looked. A book-selector who uses good judgment will of course steer between this Scylla

and this Charybdis, and the result will be a collection that the community can use with both pleasure and profit. Moreover, as time goes on, the readers' taste and the quality of their library will both slowly but surely rise. No two towns are alike. Where the books have been thus selected, the collections will reflect the character of the communities, not only in literary taste but in many other things. The industries of the towns are likely to differ. In one, perhaps, there are potteries; in the other, shoe factories. The workers in the industries and even outsiders interested in them for local reasons, should have an opportunity to consult their literature. The natural resources of the regions doubtless differ—their crops, their mineral output, their attractiveness to the summer tourist. Transportation facilities vary. All these things have their reflection in books and the differences of the towns have their corresponding reflections in their libraries.

Many years ago, your lecturer called the attention of librarians to the fact that they have in their own statistical tables a means of ascertaining whether they are keeping up with the reading-tendencies of their communities in book-purchase. Nearly every library classifies both its stock and its circulation, and tabulates both for the year, giving also the percentage of each class to the whole. Now suppose, for instance, that his tables show nine per cent. of history on the shelves, we will say, whereas the circulation of the same class is eleven per cent. Evidently his readers are fonder of history than he is. They read it in greater degree than he buys it. Moral; buy more history. Of course this would be the moral only where the tendency shown was to be encouraged. For instance the average percentage of fiction on the shelves in a public library is probably about thirty, whereas its circulation runs from sixty

to sixty-five. We do not say here "Buy more fiction", because fiction reading needs no encouragement, but rather judicious restraint, although I certainly am not one of those who condemn it. I wish, however, that we could divide our novels into three classes, good, indifferent and bad, and then test the public demand by the method outlined above. I am convinced that some surprises might be in store for us.

Among the subjects that differ totally in two localities, local history and biography are conspicuous. Both citizens and visitors are often interested in them. There are features of each that are of more than local interest, but the purely local side must generally be taken care of by the library or not at all. Sometimes there is a local historical society whose work, of course, the library will not try to duplicate; but there is always room for co-operation, stimulation and aid. A moribund historical body may often be galvanized into life by an interested librarian. The library may offer such a body the hospitality of its building and shelf-room for its collections with mutual benefit. But in scores of towns there is only languid interest in local history or local worthies, and the library itself must do all that is done. Material bearing on these local matters rarely consists of books. It will include local newspapers, clippings, a pamphlet or two, menus, leaflets, programs—all sorts of printed things issued by churches, schools, clubs and societies, and lost as soon as issued unless caught at once and preserved. Here is the library's chance to possess a collection that is the only one of its kind in the world; for outside the home town no one would think of getting it together. Supplementing these printed records may be all sorts of manuscript material—letters, diaries, reminiscences or narratives written or dictated especially for the library by persons who have some-

thing locally interesting to tell. If there are maps showing the growth of the town or anything else of interest about it, the library is the place for it. The collection and arrangement need take none of the busy librarian's time, for there is always someone in the town whose interest and labor can be enlisted. If nothing else can be done, at least a file of the local newspaper can be kept and indexed on cards, especially for names of localities and persons. Work of this kind done currently and not allowed to accumulate, does not take much time.

In these days of universal snapshots, local photographs are easy to get. The librarian may take a few herself and the library may well defray the expense. A hundred years from now, twenty views of your main street, taken at five-year intervals from the same point and showing the progressive changes, would be worth their weight in gold. Groups taken "just for fun" or for family reasons, are often worth keeping because they show the fashions of the day. These are of no particular interest to us now, but any of us would be glad to have in our libraries a collection of groups showing prevalent modes of dress in our towns during each year in the last century. Old buildings are often torn down to make room for new. These should be photographed before they go.

All material of this kind is peculiar to the library where it is preserved and helps to make that library's collections a departure from standardization whose importance we need, perhaps, insist on no further.

It may not be possible to collect in the library all of the interesting local material in the town. Much of it may be in the hands of private owners who will not part with it. Some of it may be owned by clubs, churches or public bodies. In this case there should be an index somewhere to indicate

where it is, and there is no more appropriate place for this index than the library. I have elsewhere suggested that where this privately-owned material consists of books, cards for them may be inserted also in the library's public catalogue. But, in addition, there is no limit to the extent to which the library may go in indexing material, and this work may well enlist the interest and efforts of volunteers. There may be an index to old furniture, one of colonial houses, possibly illustrated and annotated like the fine one prepared by Mr. Godard for the Connecticut State Library, one of soldiers sent by the town to various wars, one of noteworthy storms or of very high or low temperatures, one to local organizations, past and present. The special interests of the community will guide these efforts, and here too the library of one town will differ materially from that of another.

Possibly library standardization has affected buildings more than anything else about a library. There was a time where its absence was doing a great deal of harm, especially in the case of small or medium-sized libraries put up under the Carnegie gift. Every board and every local architect had a different idea, but all seemed to agree that the building, no matter how small, was to be a monument, with a rotunda and a dome; and a good deal of waste resulted. There was a loud call for some kind of a standard plan, and small library buildings, whether for branches or independent libraries, are now a good deal alike, so much so that we can often pick out a library building by its outward guise, and that we will sometimes say of a post-office or an art gallery, "That looks exactly like a library". This ease of identification is of course good as far as it goes; but it should not interfere with a certain degree of adaptation to local conditions. This is obvious in the

case of sites offering local peculiarities. For instance, the High Bridge Branch of the New York Public Library is built on a steep hillside. The architect has taken advantage of this fact to arrange an entrance on the ground level on each of the three floors. The lowest is a service entrance, the next above leads to the children's room and the uppermost to the adult department. Each door opens on a different street and the three facades are respectively three, two and one story high. Evidently no standard plan would have been of use here. The building, inside and out, had to be planned for this site and this alone. And although not many sites require such special treatment as this there are many that do not lend themselves to the erection of a rigid standard building. In Detroit the Carnegie Committee, I am told, were inclined to insist on a basement assembly room in branches to be built on ground where any basement at all would involve wasteful expense of construction. The proposed contents of a building should often affect its plan. Some architects have not yet learned the difference between an independent library and a branch of the same size and probable circulation. An independent library may have to house treasures, and should be of fire-proof construction. A branch rarely houses anything that can not easily be replaced and it may be waste of money to make it fire-proof.

The architectural style of a library building is often properly made to conform with some style peculiar to the locality or regarded as suitable for it. The Riverside Public Library in California is properly in the Spanish colonial or Mission style; that of New Haven, Conn., is a modified New England Colonial, the Jackson Square Branch in New York is Dutch, the Chestnut Hill Branch in Philadelphia and the Public Library in Harrisburg are of the ir-

regular stone masonry so familiar in many parts of Pennsylvania. Some of the branches in Portland, Ore., used to be and perhaps still are of wood, built of the Douglas fir of the surrounding region.

The power of the purse is an important thing in libraries as elsewhere, and possibly we should have taken up earlier the variations of library income with locality. Not only are some communities better able to support a library than others, but of two with equal ability one will excel in interest and willingness to give. An attempt to regulate income by rule is the requirement of the Carnegie Committee that a municipality shall appropriate for the support of a library in a Carnegie Building, not less than ten per cent. of its cost. I know that the condition is primarily stated the other way around. The town is supposed to decide what it can give to support a library and then the Carnegie Committee is willing to capitalize this at ten per cent. But the library once built, its cost becomes the fixed item and the appropriation the variable one, and in many cases it has varied so far downward as to constitute a violation of the town's library contract. Of late the Committee is making an effort to detect and tabulate these violations and to use them as a basis for witholding donations in neighborhoods where they have been frequent. A man is known by the company he keeps, and it may be just to regard with some suspicion one who lives in a neighborhood where dishonest persons congregate. Still, towns are unlike men, since their locations are fairly permanent, and it scarcely seems right to turn down Jonesville's request for a Carnegie library because Smithtown, 35 miles away, has been unable to appropriate the ten per cent. that it promised. The Committee has also made what I regard as the mistake of finding fault with the library that suffers from an

unduly reduced appropriation, instead of with the city or town government that is responsible for the reduction. To throw blame on the head of an institution that has just been robbed of its birthright would seem to be adding insult to injury. But despite the failure of this particular effort at standardization, there seems to be a feeling that library incomes should be so far standardized as to be calculable from the particular set of circumstances under which the library is working. The State of New York once attempted to regulate its library appropriation by home-use alone—so many cents per volume circulated. This was a very crude attempt, but possibly we ought to be able to say just how many dollars ought to support a library in a building of specified size with so many books, and a circulation of so many per year. This matter was the subject of earnest discussion for a year or more in the American Library Institute, but no definite conclusion was reached. It has always been my belief that some sort of formula could be deduced by mathematical methods from a large number of observed data, that is, the statistics of a series of normally-conducted libraries. Observe that this is not so much standardization as an attempt to systematize the recognition of differences.

With the average librarian the practical question is not so much what sum he ought to have to run his library, as how he can and shall run it with what he has. Limitation of income invariably limits service, and unfortunately the kind of service on which it bears most sharply is that which is the library's specialty—namely the provision of books. The purchase of books should be the last thing in which the library ought to economize but in practice it is generally the first. The building must be cared for—lighted and heated; the public must be served.

But it is easy to stop buying books, and it is in book-purchase that the library with small income differs from its neighbor with plenty of money. There are some curious exceptions where the library can not wholly control the expenditure of its money, which is regulated by the dead hand of a testator. Thus the Forbes Library of Northampton, Mass., now sensibly consolidated with the Public Library of that city, was obliged for years to expend most of its income for the purchase of books, leaving practically nothing for keeping up its building or paying its staff. It was thus rich where a library is usually poor and *vice versa*.

The earliest efforts at standardization among librarians were directed toward cataloguing; and probably cataloguers are our greatest sticklers for a rigid adherence to rules. Those who read Mr. E. L. Pearson's column in *The Boston Transcript* realize that there are some librarians who consider this fact a legitimate target for ridicule. And it is clear, I think, that both the methods and results of cataloguing ought not to be immune from modification to adopt them to local peculiarities. Some public libraries are used so much for scholarly or antiquarian research that their catalogues need to approximate that of a university library; others are of so popular a nature that they hardly need a catalogue at all. The needs of a certain community may require the very full analysis of certain books, whereas elsewhere these could do very well with less analysis, or possibly none at all. The selection of subject headings may have to be made with due regard to the use that a catalogue is likely to receive. Books on open shelves do not need precisely the same kind of cataloguing as those to which access is not allowed. A library's public, too, sometimes gets into habits, and if these are unobjectionable, it may be

better to humor them than to try to change them. Some bodies of readers like as many printed lists as possible; others rarely use them. In some places there is great demand for a monthly bulletin; elsewhere it is little used. Any librarian who does not stand ready to adapt his catalogue in some respects to the character and needs of his readers runs the risk of limiting his field of service.

Methods of distribution may require selection or modification to suit local peculiarities. Take, for instance, the choice of a charging system. "Which is the best charging system?" is a question frequently asked of experienced librarians or library school instructors. This query is on a par with "What is the best material for clothes?", or "Is paregoric or ipecac the best medicine?" A librarian who finds in her new job a charging-system that she dislikes, which has been used without complaint for years, should investigate before changing. Acceptance of the system may be simply due to habit. Even then, as we have seen, there may be reason for retaining it. And there is a fair chance that it may have held its ground because it is in some way better adapted to the community. Of course the adaptation may be to something else—size, for example. A rapid rise in the circulation may take a library out of the small-library class and necessitate changes not only in charging system but in many other things.

Some day an industrious student of library economy will tabulate these things that are independent of local conditions, or so nearly so that it is better to standardize them, and tell how the others should be varied with local topography, climate and population. There is no time for that in a single lecture; and if I can leave firmly fixed in your minds the idea that some things are better standardized, while others should be functions of variable local condi-

tions, I shall have accomplished all that I set out to do.

I have already noted some of the differences between a branch library and a central library. Possibly these deserve further mention as an instance of the adaptation of methods of distribution to locality. I have frequently had occasion to deal with complaints which on investigation proved to be due to the fact that the complaining reader expected to find at a branch library all the facilities of a central library. He had lived near the central library in one city, and had moved to another where it was more convenient for him to use a branch. The first thing that strikes him is that the reference collection is inadequate. He does not realize that the central reference collection can not possibly be duplicated at branch libraries. Such complaints, however, may often give the librarian a hint. He may have equipped all his branches with the same small, good reference collection, forgetting that reference work varies with locality. Several complaints of this sort from the same branch may indicate the necessity of enlarging the reference collection there or perhaps of adopting some such scheme as we are trying in St. Louis of a central reference collection of duplicates for supplying temporary branch needs.

It is not always realized that the character of the book-collection in a branch library is influenced by the mere fact that it is a branch, apart from considerations of size, circulation and character of readers. There are many standard books, in small demand, that no library should be without. One copy will serve the needs of the whole town. If there is but one library there the book must form part of that library's collection, whereas if there are a central building and branches, it should be in the central library—not in the branches. It is for this rea-

son that the A. L. A. catalogue should not be used for stocking a branch. I know of cases where numbers of books lie idle on the shelves of every branch in a city system, because they are not branch books at all. One or two copies at Central would have been sufficient, and to place them in branches has been waste of money.

When the New York Public Library took in a considerable number of small independent libraries as branches I had the opportunity, a year or so after the event, of ascertaining from the librarians, what difference to them and to their readers the change of status had made. They were unanimous in saying that although they, as librarians, felt less independent, the service to readers was vastly improved, owing to the fact that the library now formed part of a large system. This is always the result of any kind of union of effort, whether by consolidation or co-operation. The individual is somewhat hampered but the community is benefited. This, of course, is something of a departure from our subject.

Sometimes the chief difference between two localities is in the character and temper of the readers. The whole scheme of relations between library and public needs often to be altered in moving from one place to another. This is perhaps most noticeable in a city where there is a system of branch libraries. The assistant who has been transferred from a Jewish to a Scandinavian district and then to one occupied by well-to-do Americans will understand what I mean without further explanation.

But this difference in readers is of course much wider than mere racial difference. It may be a difference in social status. We Americans are too apt to pretend that this sort of thing does not affect a public educational institution, but it decidedly does.

Some librarians make the mistake of thinking that these differences are racial also. It is a matter of common knowledge among city librarians that in a "slum" library the problem of discipline is simplicity itself compared with a library where the readers are nearly all well-to-do. This is often asserted to depend merely on the racial difference between the newly arrived immigrant—Russian Jew, Italian or Pole—and the native American. But we find that when the immigrant has learned the customs of the country and has made enough money to raise him in the social scale and enable him to move from his slum surroundings, he quickly takes his place with the well-to-do library patrons. He is more exacting and his children are harder to manage. The difference is really a social one. The immigrant is accustomed to being looked down on in his native country, to living on little and having few principles. He is humble and thankful for small favors. What he gets at the library fills him with amazement and gratitude. Mary Antin has told us all about it. But the well-to-do citizen, whether by birth or recent acquirement, realizes that the library is being supported by his taxes. He realizes it, in fact, so keenly, that he gives it somewhat undue prominence in his mind and sometimes shows this in his treatment of the library staff. Knowing that the library belongs in part to him, he may often forget that it belongs in equal degree to others. He is impatient or even resentful of rules intended to maintain equality of service. His children unconsciously absorb this same attitude. They resent control and are hard to keep in order. Much of the librarians' time must be given to smoothing down ruffled feathers and maintaining discipline—time which ought to be given to bettering the quality of service.

Evidently these two kinds of communities must be handled differently. They call for different train-

ing on the part of the staff—a different stock of books —almost for different buildings. Then there is the indifferent community, which may be anywhere in the social scale and which requires special handling. It is even difficult to tell at times whether or not a community is really indifferent. Their reaction to the library is often a phase of the local feeling that is the subject of this lecture. It is present in some communities and absent in others, but its presence does not always mean real appreciation of library privileges, nor does its absence mean lack of such appreciation.

Not more than a few months apart, about ten years ago, two branch libraries were opened in New York. One was in Greenwich Village, a district of strong local peculiarities, which I fear it is about to lose because writers have taken to describing them in the magazines. The other was on 96th street, which was a part of New York like any other. The "Village" took the greatest interest in the library from the moment when its site was selected. The building was watched from its foundation up. Bad little boys annoyed the workmen. Local politicians and merchants congratulated the neighborhood and told us how fine they thought it was all going to be. Everybody wanted to take part in the opening exercises and nearly everybody did. There were floods of oratory and crowds of visitors. But having obtained the library and done what it considered its whole duty in the premises, Greenwich Village, not being a community of readers, proceeded to leave us to our own devices and it was only after months of up-hill work that the Branch succeeded in getting anything like a respectable circulation.

On the other hand the establishment, construction and opening of the 96th Street Branch were treated by the surrounding residents with supreme

indifference. No one had asked to have a branch located at this point, which had been selected solely for reasons of topography and population. As the building went up, no one asked whether it was a school or a bank. Nobody came to the opening exercises. And yet when the library began to circulate books the community responded to such an extent that in a short time the branch was giving them out at the rate of 40,000 a month. Here the interest and pride of a community in the possession of a library building and its disposition to make use of the library are clearly shown to be two different things. In this case the two communities were parts of the same city, but separate towns often show the same phenomenon. Some of the most indifferent library towns, for instance, are the ones where superhuman efforts were put forth to secure a Carnegie building.

A kind of standardization of which we can not have too little is that controlled by the man who takes himself as the standard—his own ideas, prejudices and habits. This kind of standardizer is not always aware of what he is doing. He believes that his methods are the best. They may be best for him and possibly for the particular environment in which he has been working . I am not sure that some of our most cherished library habits did not originate in this way—were not originally simply the personal whims of some able and forceful library administrator who was in a position, in the formative stage of library progress, to impress them on the fabric of our work. Fortunately for us, the men of this kind, in the early history of the library movement, were not only men of force but generally of commonsense as well. Possibly their habits and customs were as good as any others that we might have adopted. I am sure that they were better than some. But individual points of view may in some cases

prove disastrous. I remember an English novel in which a local librarian personally interested in the history of the French Revolution, uses all the available funds of his institution for years to buy books on the subject, building up a fine collection, but making his library useless for its ordinary purposes. His successor, a man with other interests, threw out the whole collection. I have often wondered which of these two librarians one ought to condemn most. Both are examples of the injury that may be done by what we may call auto-standardization.

I am preparing this whole lecture with a fear that some one of this kind may think he is adapting his library to his locality when he is only standardizing it by himself. Self-deception may go far in matters of this kind, and there is something to be said in favor of hard and fast standardization without departure of any kind, in that it prevents aberrations such as I have just hinted at. I trust that no self-standardizer is in my present audience.

Our conclusion from all this should be, I think, that a library should not only assimilate its methods to those of other libraries—which is standardization, but should react to the needs and conditions of its own surroundings, which is localization. If you would know the extent of this local reaction and the character of its results, ask the members of the library's community, especially if that community is small. And we must remember that no library community is large, so far as its direct popular use is concerned. Whether it is in a village or a city, whether it is a central library or a branch, it is effective as a community centre only within a small circle, of perhaps half a mile radius. The residents of this circle are in a position to give testimony regarding the library's local services. If it has succeeded in adapting itself to local needs its reputa-

tion will be that of a valuable, helpful, well-disposed institution; if not, the neighbors will be hostile, or at least indifferent. Libraries that are in constant trouble with their readers—the object of continual complaint and controversy, generally have the feeling that the fault is with the public. Sometimes it is; for a maladjustment is seldom on one side alone. But more often it is chiefly due to the fact that the library has overlooked its purely local functions, while possibly at the same time conforming most admirably to what are considered the best library standards. No library can afford to neglect its special duties to its locality and if these conflict with standardization, it should be the general standards and not the local adjustments, that should go by the board.

INDEX

Administration, Cost of, 217
Advertising, General, 277; In the library, 35, 172
Age limit for children, 210
Allen, James Lane, quoted, 66
A. L. A. catalog, 422; President's address, 121
American Library Institute, 418
American idea of delegated authority, 57; Of propriety, 133
Americans as money-lovers, 156
Antin, Mary, quoted, 423
Appointments, 95
Appropriation for books, 24
Architecture of libraries, 315
Art, Not intellectual, 331
Assassins, Persian sect, 129
Autograph collections, 398
Auto-standardization, 425

Badness, Three kinds in books, 207
Beginners, Message to, 357
Beresford, J. D., quoted, 372
Best books defined, 141
Biblia abiblia, 288
Bibliographies for book selection, 19
Binding, Choice of, 25
Boards of trustees, 39, 49, 93
Book committees, 22, 147
Book-lovers, 99
Book selection, 17, 125; Raising standard of, 141
Book-taught Bilkins, 106
Books, Distribution of, 30; Love of, 97; Waste of, 163; Influence of locality on stock of, 411
Booksellers' League (N.Y.), 85
Boston Public Library, 186
Boston Transcript, 419
Bowdoin College library, 394
Branch dep't., Jurisdiction of, 233
Branch libraries, 93, 421; Gifts of sites, 178
Brooklyn Public Library, 12; Scheme of service, 189
Bryan, William J., 270
Buildings, Future, 81; Standardization of, 415
Bulletins, Picture, 31, 402
Business man's library, 269

Ca'Canny policy, 155
Carlyle, Thomas, quoted, 64
Carnegie, Andrew, Gifts of, 90; quoted, 105
Carnegie Committee, Requirements of, criticized, 417
Cash-registers, 11
Cataloguing, Local modifications of, 419
Catholics and the library, 300
Censor, Librarian as a, 121
Center, Definition of, 111; Functions of, 114
Chance, Definition of, 374
Charging systems, 420
Chestnut Hill Branch, Phila., 416
Children, Work with, 85
Children's department, Jurisdiction of, 233
Christian Scientists and the library, 301
Church and library, 299
Churches, Duplication of, 344
Circulation, Statistics of, 75; At long range, 221
Civic League, St. Louis, 405
Civil Service Commission, N.Y., 190
Civil Service in libraries, 183
Class-percentages, Comparison of, 148
Classification of work, 222
Clippings, 399
Closed-shelf issue, 221
Commercial system in libraries, 160
Conflicts of jurisdiction, 231, 351
Connecticut State Library, 415

Contract system, 94
Cost of libraries, 85
Cyclopedia, Library as a, 146

Dana, John C., quoted, 261, 317
Decameron, criticized, 137
Delivery service, Frequent, 228
Delivery station work, 221
Detroit branches, 416
Distributer, Library as a, 29
Dont's, for book-selectors, 150
Downtown branch, 228
Drudgery, 102
Duns on postal cards, 13
Duplication, Sin of, 341

Education, 257; Through libraries, 59, 87; University of, 111
Educational center, Library as, 111
Educational results, 52
Efficiency records, 199; quoted, 385
Eliot, Charles W., quoted, 80
Envelopes for filing, 400
Ephemeral books, 34, 89, 104
Examinations, 186
Exclusion of books, Grounds for, 122; Of readers, 242
Exhibits in a library, 397
Expenditures, Division of, 418
Experiments, 370, 389
Expert advisers for book-selection, 125, 145
Experts, Control by, 40, 49
Exploitation of libraries, 321
Extension of library service, 365

Falsity in books, 123
Feed-wires, Compared with books, 168
Fiction, Appraisal of, 23; Selection of, 147
Finance, 51; Statistics of, 73
Fines, 4
Forbes Library, 419
Force, Fields of, 115
Forecasts, 310
Foreign books, 133
Formalism in libraries, 290, 320
French ideas of propriety, 132

Genius, Definitions of, 64
Gerould, Mrs., quoted, 291
Gifts, Undesirable, 173
Gil Blas, criticized, 137
Glennon, John J., 274
Godard, George, 415
Grades in the staff, 186
Grant, Ulysses S., Life of, 380
Greenwich Village, New York City, Library in, 424
Group-education, 116
Group-psychology, 285
Group-value of collections, 402
Groups, Recognition of, 315

Harrisburg Public Library, 416
Hicks, Frederick C., quoted, 261, 264
Hierarchy, Control by a, 42
High Bridge Branch, New York City, 416
House-to-house delivery, 871
Houses, Index to, 415
Hungarian books, 368
Hysteresis, 269

Imponderables, 260
Income from fines, 7
Indecency and immorality distinguished, 127
Indianapolis Public Library, Address at opening, 283
Initiative, Need of, 361
Insurance, A relief of "ill luck," 390
Interest and initiative, 384
Inventory, 70, 74

Jackson Square Branch, New York City, 416
James, William, quoted, 117, 260
Japanese, Heritage of, 167

Kent, William, quoted, 206
Kipling, Rudyard, quoted, 168

Language, Best of, 142
Lantern-slides, 404
Lay control in libraries, 39, 49
Lecky, W. H. H., 128
Lectures, Collections taken at, 175
Lenox Library, 393
Librarians, Three kinds of, 241
Librarians' libraries, 50

Library, The small, 29; And the business man, 269; The subscription, 293
Library schools, 95
Library work, Future of, 309
Local history, 413; Material, 117
Locality, Library and, 409
Luck in the library, 373
Lutherans and the library, 301

Machine-work, 157
Mal-employment in the library, 205
Mallock, W. H., quoted, 153
Mayer, Dr. Alfred G., quoted, 357
Medical officers, 380
Meetings in libraries, 314
Militarism, Union against, 271
Miller, Elsie, quoted, 224
Missionary work of libraries, 313
Morgan, J. P., 390, 394
Moving pictures, 285
Museum, Library as a, 393
Music, Popularization of, 325
Mutilation of books, 14

Napoleon, Anecdote of, 373
Nationalization of libraries, 310
New Haven Public Library, 416
New York, Consolidation of libraries in, 350
New York Free Circulating Library, Scheme of service, 185
New York Public Library, 312, 422; Science circulation, 18; Scheme of service, 192
Newman, Cardinal, quoted, 66
Newspaper science, 124
Newspapers, 105
Ninety-Sixth St. Branch, New York City, 425
Non-partizanship, 180, 270; In book selection, 126

Omission, Sin of, 341
Open shelf libraries, 82
Organization of idleness, 153
Othello criticized, 137
Overdue books, 8

Pains and penalties, 3
Pay-duplicate system, 6
Pearson, E. L., 419; quoted, 208
Phonograph records, 336, 405
Photographs, Local, 414
Pianola rolls, 336, 405
Plates as museum material, 396, 397
Play defined, 112
Poe, Edgar A., 284
Poetry, Increased taste for, 283
Poets, libraries and realities, 283
Political interference with libraries, 320
Popularization of information, 123; Of libraries, 310
Portland, Ore., branches, 417
Postal-card material, 400
Postal-cards, Illegal, 13
Prairie psychology, 294
Private collections indexed, 415
Problem novel, 130
Professional training, 318
Professionalization of libraries, 310
Profit in a library, 161
Promotions, 186
Property, Waste of, 163
Public Control by, 42, 49; What is it? 91
Public-opinion, Power of, 166
Publicity, 35, 280, 304
Publishers' Weekly, 20

Racial or social status? 423
Readers, Statistics of, 76
Reading of music, 326
Realism, 285
Recreation through libraries, 60
Recreational results, 53
Reference use, Statistics of, 75
Registration, size and growth, 36
Reich, Emil, quoted, 118
Repetition in fiction, 347
Reputation, Importance of, 165
Reserves, Unlocking of, 117
Reviews, 21
Riley, James Whitcomb, 283
Riverside Public Library, Cal., 416
Rules, 352; Authority for, 12

St. Louis Pageant, 407
St. Louis plan (pay duplicate), 6
St. Louis Public Library, 314, 367, 396; Efficiency records, 200; Scheme of service, 194

Savage, Characteristics of, 357
Scholarship in libraries, 287
School and library, 60, 88
School, Function of, 113
School libraries, 255
Scrapbooks, 399
Screens for display, 397
Service systems, 183
Shaw, George Bernard, 127
Sight-reading, 333
Simplicity, Best of, 142
Smith, Munroe, quoted, 259
Social results, 55
Socialists, Mistake of, 155
Socialization of libraries, 310
Special libraries, 316
Standardization, Limits of, 409
Statistics, 69, 161; Use of in book-purchase, 412
Sumner, William G., quoted, 133
Sunday school libraries, 301
Superficiality defined, 135
System, Magazine, 280
System in the library, 153

Talk, Unnecessary, 214
Taste, Cultivation of, 33, 329; Test of 142
Telephone use, 274
Text-books, Composite, 264; Unsatisfactory, 124
Textiles, 400
Theft of books, 14
Time, Waste of, 163, 353
Trade-lists, 19
Travelling libraries, 86
Triviality, 135
Trustees, 39, 49
Trustees' Section, A. L. A., 44, 49
Truth in advertising, 278; I books, 123; As a test, 142
Turgenief as a realist, 347

Vacations, 212, 215
Vincent, George E., quoted, 116
Volta Review, quoted, 265

Walmsley, H. R., quoted, 265
Wister, Owen, quoted, 132

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